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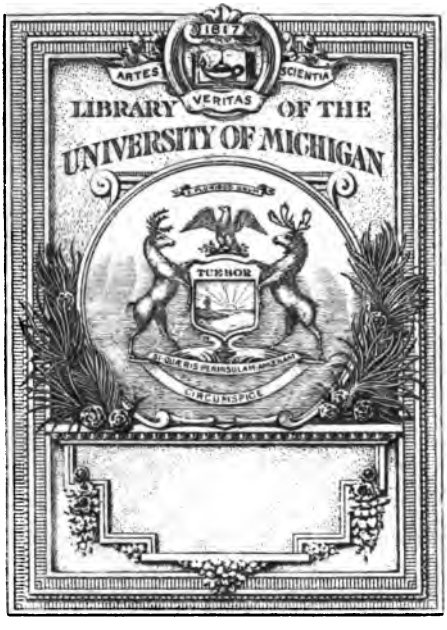

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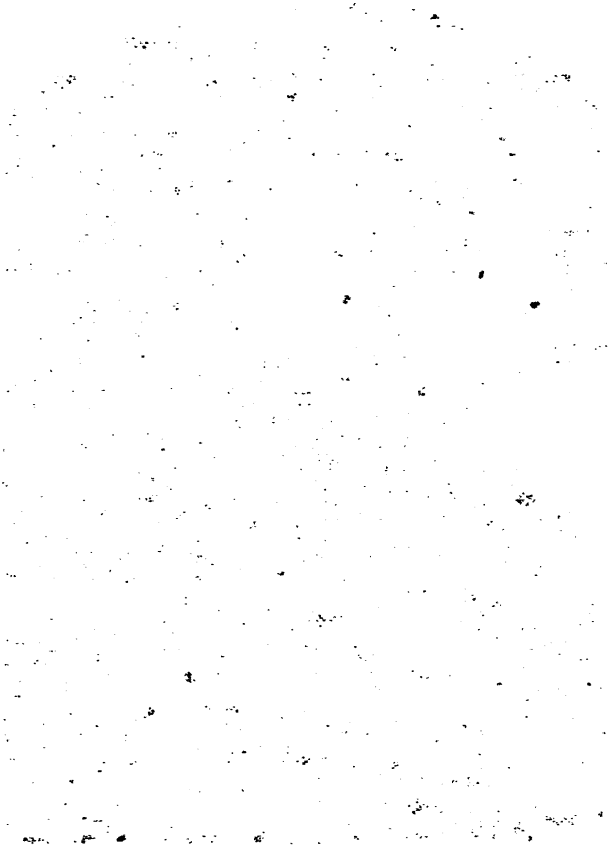

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CHAMBERS' PEOPLE'S EDITION.

MODERN

FRENCH LITERATURE.

BY

L. RAYMOND DE VERICOUR,

FORMERLY LECTURER IN THE ROYAL ATHENÆUM, PARIS; AUTHOR OF "MILTON ET LA POESIE EPIQUE;" MEMBER OF THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ROME; THE HISTORICAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE, ETC. ETC.

REVISED, WITH NOTES

ALLUDING PARTICULARLY TO WRITERS PROMINENT IN LATE POLITICAL EVENTS IN PARIS.

BY

WILLIAM STAUGHTON CHASE, A. M.

BOSTON:
GOULD, KENDALL AND LINCOLN,
59, WASHINGTON STREET.
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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

It is impossible to know a people well without an acquaintance with its literature. This is especially true with reference to France. In no other country is literature so emphatically the expression of society. The changes of opinion and sentiment within the last eighteen years have been faithfully represented by the various productions of the press. Since 1830, the incessant activity of the French mind has annually yielded in books, pamphlets, and monthly, weekly and daily journals, a quantity of printed matter which would form in octavo leaves, counting the copies of each edition, an average of two hundred and forty million volumes. In this mass are many worthless and worse than worthless productions, by some of which it is feared that modern French writers are often indiscriminately judged in the United States. But there are also contained in it numerous works which are both unexceptionable in spirit and excellent in form.

The editor of the present treatise was unwilling, while at Paris, to lose an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the more valuable portions of recent French literature. He was naturally desirous that the results of his conscientious studies might be offered to the public in such a way as would tend to remove prejudices with which the subject is unfortunately connected in this country. But convinced that the latter purpose can be effected sooner, and perhaps better, by less ambitious labors than those of authorship, he has, by the advice of his Father,

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prepared an American edition of De Véricour's "Modern French Literature." The original work has been submitted to the inspection of Mr. Henry W. Longfellow, Professor of the French and Spanish Languages and Literatures, and of Belles-Lettres, at Harvard University, as well as to that of Mr. George Ticknor, his predecessor there in the same department. Without, of course, endorsing everything said by the author, these distinguished scholars have permitted an allusion in this place to the highly favorable impression received by them from the tone of sobriety and candor pervading the treatise, and from its large amount of information respecting all the principal modern French writers. Similar commendation has been bestowed by Mr. Charles Sumner, Mr. C. C. Jewett, lately Professor of Modern Languages at Brown University, Rev. Messrs. W. R. Williams, E. N. Kirk, R. Turnbull, and by several other competent judges. Besides, the Revolution of 1848 renders peculiarly opportune a work whose chief immediate value consists in developing those political tendencies in France which have led, sooner than might have been anticipated, to the overthrow of the Orleans dynasty and the establishment of a Republic.

M. de Véricour, who is a member of the Archæological Society of Rome, the Historical Institute of France, and other learned associations in Europe, was formerly a professor at the Royal Athenæum in Paris. Among the works of which he is the author, are a valuable Report on the Educational Systems of Hofwyl, and an Essay entitled *Milton et la Poesie Epique*, which has been praised by leading British Reviews as "honorable to his study and appreciation of Milton." His residence during many years in Great Britain, eminently qualified him to become an interpreter of the French to the English mind. While writing this treatise on Modern French Literature, the best, and indeed the only succinct work of the kind, he was attached to the Educational Institution at Twickenham, a place famous as the abode of Pope, the English poet, and, in later times, of Louis Philippe, during different periods of exile.

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The first publication of the work originated in the conviction of those enlightened friends of a healthy popular literature, William and Robert Chambers of Edinburgh, that "this full account of the respectable literature of France, drawn up from an extensive and minute knowledge of the subject, might help to promote a good understanding between France and England." That a similar object may be attained in regard to France and the United States is the wish of the American publishers, whose late reprint of Chambers's Cyclopædia of English Literature has been so successful as to inspire a hope that the present encyclopedical survey of French Literature will also be acceptable to the community.

The labors of the American editor are altogether unpretending. He has ventured to correct such occasional infelicities of expression as might be expected from a foreigner writing in English. In some cases he has left untouched words and phrases which he might not have chosen himself, but which had obviously been selected by the author on the strength of recognized authorities. Obliged to write the Notes under circumstances beyond his control and quite unfavorable to careful literary composition, he has aimed to exhibit as clearly and briefly as possible a number of facts which, he believes, may be considered reliable. It will at once be seen why a large space is devoted to those writers whom the events of February have rendered unusually conspicuous.

The volume is furnished with a likeness of one whose triple renown as poet, orator, and historian, while illustrating the intimate union in France between letters and politics, has increased his glory as the hero-statesman of the Third French Revolution. The engraving from which this mezzotint is taken was copied, it has been conjectured, from a portrait of Lamartine by his wife. Although the original was painted some years ago, it gives a better idea of his countenance and air than any of the prints which have lately appeared.

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The thanks of the editor are due to Mr. Folsom of the Boston Athenæum, Mr. Forbes of the New York Society Library, Dr. Harris of the Library of Harvard University, Mr. J. H. Buckingham of this city, and, in particular, to Rev. Dr. Williams of New York, for extending to him facilities, more fruits of which he would gladly have presented, if his limits had allowed.

W. S. C.

Library of the Am. Acad. of Arts and Sciences,
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

I HAVE endeavored in the following pages to give a succinct and clear outline of the intellectual progress of France in the nineteenth century. I do not pretend to have written a treatise on the subject. My purpose has merely been to point out several departments of literature and intellectual development which mark the national progress, hoping to induce the reader to turn to our modern literature itself for further information. I have been led to my task by a conviction that the English public is liable to be misled, with regard to French literature, by the injustice of a partial, capricious fame, and by the venality of the public press; and that a candid *resumé* of the subject was desirable for the sake of both nations. Many years of methodical assiduous reading, and researches in the fields of other literatures, have in some measure prepared me for my undertaking; but I am only disposed to claim credit for the feelings with which I have approached it. Though France has been the subject of a few works of late years, it may be said that none give the *ensemble* of the national progress, intellectual, moral, and political. They are either exclusively political, giving endless and useless details on the Revolution of 1830; or consist of a few extracts from the most popular novelists and dramatists; or pretending to give an account of Parisian manners and society, merely convey the knowledge that is to be gathered in the streets, the cafés, and boarding-houses.

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We live in an age of cheap fame. A sort of literary machinery exists, of which the patent paper-mill, the power-press, the newspapers, magazines, and reviews, the reading clubs and circulating libraries, are some of the principal springs and levers, by means of which almost anything in the shape of a book is thrown into a sort of notoriety, miscalled reputation. Those who habitually take unfavorable views, seeing a frequent display of superficial acquirements, are apt to infer a decline of sound learning, and look back with a sigh to what they imagine to have been the more solid erudition of former days. But such notions, with respect to foreign literature especially, are generally the offspring of prejudice and imperfect knowledge. There have been pretenders in science and literature in every age of the world; and we must not suppose, because their works and their names have perished, that they existed in a smaller proportion formerly than now. If those of the present day seem more numerous than formerly, it is only in proportion to the increase in the entire numbers of the reading and writing world, and because the hand of time brushes away the false pretensions of former days, leaving real talent and sound learning the more conspicuous for standing alone. And, again, notwithstanding the unbroken sway of false lore, the line of the truly wise and soundly learned has also been preserved entire. I am firmly convinced that there is at the present day more patient learning, true philosophy, fruitful science, and various knowledge, than at any former times. By the side of the hosts of superficial pretenders, in every department, there is a multitude of devout lovers of truth, whom no labor can exhaust, no obstacle discourage, no height of attainment dazzle; and who, in every branch of knowledge—sacred and profane, moral, physical, exact, and critical—have carried and are carrying the glorious banner of true science into regions of investigation wholly unexplored in older times. It is this class of men, as far as it exists in France, and as far as it can be distinguished by the judgment of a contemporary, whom I have presumed to group together, and to characterize in the following pages.

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This nearly terminated moiety of the nineteenth century has witnessed the commencement of the regeneration of France. An intelligent class of independent citizens and husbandmen has sprung up on the ruins of a decayed landed aristocracy; and the consequence has been an elevation of the intellectual, and, with the political, the social and moral character of the people. To describe this great change may be said to form partly the leading object of my work, which I now lay before the English public, with an earnest hope that it will help to make my country more loved and esteemed. Science and letters, it has been remarked, are of no country; but rather they are of every country. They form a chain of common interest and sympathy between state and state, even when these are so unfortunate as to be engaged in hostile conflict. Let me hope that, by extending the knowledge of French literature in England, I may be strengthening the ties of amity between the two countries, and placing more and more distant the sad day which should see them again as they were in the days of the Republic and Empire.

Educational Institution,
Twickenham.

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CORRECTION.—On p. 48, for *characters* read *charters*.

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CHAPTER FIRST.

INTRODUCTORY.

Fichte's Definition of Literature.—Nature and Power of Literature.—Analytical Sketch of French Literature.—Villehardouin—Froissard—Comines—Montaigne—Pascal—Montesquieu—Buffon.—Influence of Rousseau and Voltaire.—The Revolution.—Irreligious Tendencies of the Eighteenth Century.—How far Rousseau and Voltaire were guilty.—Rousseau's Style—his Sophisms—Influence of his Works.—State of Literature at the Close of the Revolution—Under Bonaparte.—M. de Chateaubriand—his Character—Influence of his Works.—Madame de Stael—Influence of her Works.—Revolution in the Literature of France—its Excesses and Progress—Parallel of its Progress with that of Germany and England.—Influence of English Literature—Of Shakspeare—Ossian—Young—and Lord Byron.—Change in the French Character.—Influence of Women.—Intellectual Progress and Influence of France, England, and Germany, on the future Destiny of the World.—Grandeur of the Scientific Literature of France.—Eloquence of Bichat, Lallemand, etc.—Cuvier—Magnitude and Universality of his Genius—his Death.—Outline of the Modern Literature of France.—Intellectual Philosophy.—Political Tendencies.—Criticism.—History—its Regeneration.—Novelists—Influence of Sir Walter Scott.—Victor Hugo.—Paul de Kock.—The Drama—its Present State.—M. Scribe.—Poetry—its Present State.—Poetical Prose.—General View of the Modern Literature of France.

LITERATURE is associated in almost every mind with all that is great and noble in the manifestation of human power; but perhaps Fichte, one of those philosophers who reflect such lustre on modern Germany, has presented it in the most solemn if not the most sublime of characters. He holds that there is a Divine Idea pervading the visible universe, which visible universe is but its symbol and personification, animated by the principle of vitality. To the bulk of mankind this Divine Idea of the world lies hidden; to discern and grasp it, to live wholly in it, is the privilege and lot of virtue, knowledge, freedom, and the end, therefore, of all intellectual efforts in every age. Literary men are the appointed interpreters of this Divine Idea—a perpetual priesthood, we may almost say, standing forth, generation after

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generation, as the dispensers and living types of God's everlasting wisdom, commissioned to make it manifest, and, as their particular times require, to reveal and embody it by successive fragments in their works.

The philosopher proceeds (in his course of lectures delivered at Jena, On the Being of the Literary Man*) to explain how each age, by its peculiar inherent tendencies, is different from every other age, and demands a different representation of this Divine Idea; how every laborer in the vineyard of letters, at all times and in all departments, must first have possessed himself of this Divine Idea, or at least with his whole heart and soul striven to attain it; and how a man, the more he is inspired by it, becomes the true and perfect literary character, whilst he who, on the contrary, is not actuated by it, but is a stranger to its feeling and impulse, sinks into a mere groper in the dark.

The literary man, as thus portrayed by Fichte with regard to his functions and duties, is invested with an incomparable grandeur and dignity, befitting his elevated mission; and the sentiments he teaches seem the more sacred from the austere brevity in which he announces them—a brevity far more impressive than highly wrought rhetoric. It is not to be denied that this metaphysical theory of Fichte may be called in question, and readily enough misapprehended; but we cannot doubt that a thought so generous and sublime must find a responsive echo in many a heart. It explains the true civilizing principle of literature, and expands it to its true and natural limits, embracing all things divine and human.

Literature is indeed a most varied and unbounded universe; it is not only, according to the usual French definition, the expression of society, but also its very life and soul. With its numerous names, forms, and species, literature is not only a mirror reflecting society or national progress, but is also the breath that animates and vivifies a nation, arousing it to life and greatness, or impelling it to crime and anarchy. Literature may either be a powerful instrument for creation and regeneration, or a fatal one for destruction. Ages and nations may owe their formation to books, as much as books are engendered by ages and nations. The heroic grandeur of Greece inspired Homer; but it was from Homer that its civilization sprung.

No literature has perhaps been, so much as that of France, not only the image, the expression of society, but the very spring

* Ueber das Wesen des Gelehrten, Jena: 1805.

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of nationality. Nowhere could Buffon have said with so much truth, "*Le style c'est l'homme.*" During the thirteenth century, literature is the perfect image of that most dramatic period of the history of France; the noble, vigorous, epic style of Villehardouin is characterized by all the heroic roughness and the *naïveté* of those valorous knights whose blood covered the soil of Italy, Constantinople and Palestine. The language of the thirteenth century became afterwards impoverished, and never recovered the Latin idiom, or the expressive, energetic words that are to be found in Villehardouin, many of which the English language has so happily preserved. Nevertheless, the diction of Froissard, of Comines, of Montaigne, faithfully corresponds with the prevailing passions and ideas of France. In the *Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century*, the expressions are picturesque, capricious, and fraught with an exuberance of images, all irregular as those martial bands of the time, so greedy of warfare. The language of Philippe de Comines is more subdued and sober, rarely indulging in that play of fancy and feeling so abundant and brilliant in the pages of Villehardouin, Joinville, and Froissard. The language has lost in Comines its former raciness and vigor; it becomes dull, ambiguous, and commercial in its tone, in accordance with the policy and spirit of the times; it has left the field of battle, shorn of its epic vividness, for the closet of the crafty Louis XI.; in short, along with the country and government, it has abandoned the age of Poetry and lapsed into that of Prose.

But with Montaigne the French language takes a new construction, turning again to Greek and Latin sources, and withal so skilfully and happily modified, as, despite its classical coloring, still to remain intrinsically Gallic. The style of Montaigne combines many admirable qualities: the mirror of feeling and nature, it is the harmonious organ at once of imagination and reason, of philosophy and poetry. The delineation of human emotion seems its only aim, but it possesses also the necessary precision for the artist and the man of thought. Yet this same language, so plastic and idiomatic in the *Essays* of Montaigne, takes a new form in the hands of Pascal. With him, French becomes firm, austere, and subservient to reasoning alone—the Latin influence ceases to be predominant—the sole object in view is to give clearness, regularity, and power to the expressions. The diction of Pascal eschews all flippant, meretricious ornament, and binds the language, as it were, within the strictest logical confines.

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The rigid, austere, and lofty style of Pascal, is softened in the *Esprit des Lois*, and the *Essai sur les Mœurs*. The phraseology of Montesquieu and Voltaire rivals that of Pascal in regularity and artistic beauty, but is distinguished for greater smoothness, lightness, and buoyancy. Again, Rousseau, with his rich exuberance of language, is sometimes faulty and ungrammatical; whilst Buffon, on the contrary, is an immortal specimen of graceful majesty and uniform correctness. Thus, the beginning of the nineteenth century found the French language polished and perfected by the intellectual efforts of these great men during a course of five centuries, having at that time attained, by universal suffrage, a remarkable degree of elegance, perspicuity, and strength. It then began, with the age, to receive new forms, to undergo strange metamorphoses; in short, it was plunged into that revolution, which, signally chequered in its objects and results, in its crimes and virtues, materially affected the fortunes of all that fell within its scope. The language, the faithful image of the national spirit, struggling to shake off all fetters, has fallen, at times, into dark abysses. It has imbibed all the love of novelty characteristic of the era, and delights to revel in new phrases, words, and forms, assuming a thousand shapes to express the tumultuous feelings of the nation.

Recurring to the seventeenth century, the literature of the age of Louis XIV. presents a uniformity similar to that of the absolute monarchy; the despotic sovereign constrained the literary world to regard him alone as the object of homage and attention, and repressed the efforts and speculations of the mind within the narrow limit of progression which he permitted to things physical and material. The Grecian models were then successfully imitated; Euripides revived in Racine, and Aristophanes in Molière—Homer alone remained like an isolated gigantic monument. Hitherto the epic fire has smouldered in the atmosphere of France.

The literary character of the eighteenth century is totally different: the nation was beginning to embrace a cynical philosophy, destined to shake the social edifice to its very foundation. The ancient religion of the country was attacked with irreverence, and public opinion became deeply tainted with destructive dogmas, unredeemed by the healing principle of reconstruction. An intoxicating passion for change, for subversion, seized society: it was the effect of the execrable vices and despotism of the regency and of Louis XV. Two men, especially, became the representatives of the popular feeling, and therefore exer-

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cised a great influence on the eighteenth century, and indirectly a no less great one on the nineteenth. Voltaire had already assailed the empire of the classics, and Rousseau was preparing the basis whereon a new and distinct literature might be reared. Voltaire drew upon the resources of a matchless, inexhaustible wit; but Rousseau poured forth the effusions of a glowing yet morbid and incongruous sensibility: the former wrote profusely, merely to satisfy his thirst for glory, while the latter was stirred by the overflowing emotions of the heart. Voltaire by his works fostered the bias to infidelity, standing in the van of others, his compeers in impious sarcasm and ridicule; Rousseau seemed, on the contrary, to have consolations for even dismal scepticism; he exhorted to feelings of comparative piety, and to the ever-fruitful love of nature; the soul, in its attributes, affections, pangs, was his exalted theme, the subject that elicited the brightest emanations of his genius. Thus was heralded the mighty convulsion: the revolution burst forth in all its wildness, and France was suddenly hurled into anarchy and barbarism. Happily it was not of long duration; the reign of terror, indeed, covered the country with streams of blood, and overturned the social edifice; but soon after a new society, a youthful generation, arose from the ruins—a society of orphans, united by the common tie of misfortune, still bearing traces of tears in their smiles. Everything then took a graver aspect—a character more generous, certainly, but sombre in its hue; for France was covered with tombs. The revolutionary storm was followed by a calm, the harbinger of returning prosperity. A great reconciliation signalized the end of the revolution; Frenchmen united to lament over the misfortunes of the country, to defend its soil from foreign aggression, to remove or mitigate all existing evils. Eventually, an extraordinary man stepped from the crowd, and threw a mantle of glory over the deep and gory gash left by the revolution.

But with respect to the influence of Voltaire, of Rousseau, and the philosophers of the eighteenth century, let us pause a moment, and inquire in what degree they are really guilty of the aberrations that marked their own time and succeeding years. It has unfortunately ever been usual to attack individuals rather than principles. The culpability of individuals is certainly at times fatally influential; but it must also be admitted that men are often irresistibly, unwittingly, carried away by the flowing current of ideas. Instead of denouncing the principles of a philosopher, the philosopher himself is generally assailed; whereas,

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in all controversies, it is a wholesome rule that persons should be scrupulously respected. When a man is attacked merely for his opinions, it should be done with great caution, since allowance is to be made for the origin of those opinions—for the causes which have engendered them. Is it not a duty on the part of those who are so ready to lavish hatred and odium on the memory of the dead and the reputation of the living, to reflect a little how an opinion is adopted, and how far he who has adopted it is responsible for having done so? There is nothing more ridiculous, for instance, than the exaggerated attacks on the philosophers of the eighteenth century for having thought as they did. The French nation was beginning to read—to understand—to believe—to doubt—in short, to have an opinion, whatever it might be; and when has it been seen that an opinion, good or bad, ridiculous or sublime, had no representatives? That such is always the case is a maxim of undoubted truth, nay, a fact of necessary and unavoidable occurrence. A great man comes to represent an idea at the precise time when that idea is inevitable; he is the representative of a power not his own, for mere individual power is pitiful, and no man yields to another man: he yields only to the representative of a general power. To upbraid Voltaire and his followers for what they thought, is, in truth, to blame an effect irrespective of the cause—to condemn a wall for breaking a head wilfully dashed against it. Voltaire and his friends were guilty, but their age was much more guilty: the era in which their lot was cast is chiefly obnoxious to censure for doctrines and ideas whereof they were the mere organs. And although those very writers, so omnipotent in their day, may seem flippant and superficial to us of the present generation, it is certain that they appeared most profound and sagacious to the age in which they lived. Deeply imbued with the spirit of that age, and impelled by the genius, good or evil, which incites men to attempt to sway and influence their contemporaries, they broke forth, the beacons and luminaries not alone of their own times but of after epochs.

Benjamin Constant, in his work *De la Religion*, has justly characterized the philosophers of the eighteenth century as to the nature and extent of their knowledge; but the opprobrium with which he covers them is unjust, because he takes them in an isolated point of view—a course signally unfair and uncandid, for a man neither can nor ought to be judged without a previous accurate estimate and knowledge of his times; he must be appreciated with reference to his epoch. The fact is, that, if

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Voltaire had lived fifty years sooner, he could never have acted the part we know he filled—he would probably have vied with Corneille as a dramatist, perchance become a Jesuit or a professor, but never a philosopher. In the same manner, if Luther had lived a century sooner, he might have died a pope; and here I may take occasion to observe, that notwithstanding the great renown of Chateaubriand and Lamennais, I do not hesitate to characterize their invectives against Luther as flagrantly absurd. We should indeed vainly seek for excuses to palliate their diatribes against the father of the Protestant Church. The abuses of the papal see, and its loathsome extravagances, were such, that had not the great Luther lived at the period in question, a host of reformers would undoubtedly have appeared to consummate the schism; as it was, the Church of Rome had already been pierced to the core long ere he arose as the champion of reform.

The influence of Rousseau on the literature of modern Europe has been considerable, in spite of all his sophistry. With the exception of Voltaire, he has been the most popular author in France, and he affords a remarkable instance of the difficulty with which foreign nations can fully appreciate a writer who is rather given to *eclat*. Rousseau's style, for instance, as a mere writer, has never been completely understood in England, where he is universally spurned by all critics and reviewers. Even Lord Brougham, in his recent work on the British Statesmen of George the Third, observes that, save his *Confessions*, the citizen of Geneva wrote in inferior French. We cannot hesitate to express our surprise at such an opinion, or to qualify it as utterly unwarranted by any native authority, and as singularly rash on the part of a foreigner. No one can deplore more than we do Rousseau's abuse of his power of language; but his possession of it, in the highest degree and purest idiom, is undeniable. A few provincialisms may be traced, a few grammatical errors, which were not then considered as such; some antiquated idioms from Montaigne and Amyot, which were the adoption of his choice, as infusive of strength, but assuredly not to be deemed the indications of an inferior or exhausted vocabulary. When Lord Brougham appeals to the *Nouvelle Héloise* in support of his opinion, he forgets that the personages of the romance are made to use the language suited to their position; for Rousseau anticipates the objection, and in his preface claims indulgence for the simple unsophisticated inhabitants of remote Switzerland, though the book still teems with passa-

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ges of splendid eloquence. But the compositions which place him in the foremost rank of French writers are especially his *Emile*, his discourse *On the Inequality of Conditions*, and his *Letter to the Archbishop of Paris:* these eclipse the pretensions of all the rest. It would be easy to adduce the concurrent eulogies of French critics—of Buffon, who attributed a lofty pre-eminence to Rousseau as a writer; of Laharpe, his bitter enemy; of Barante, Villemain, and even the article in the *Biographie Universelle*, so violently hostile to the philosopher of Geneva; but it would be superfluous.

And, indeed, with regard to Rousseau, how could such a multitude of sophistical principles ever have taken root, even for a short time, but for the fascinating style in which they were inculcated? What could be more preposterous than the unbounded popular sovereignty he proclaimed? Every one knows how inapplicable to modern times are the models of antiquity constantly proposed by him as examples. In this respect, his far-famed *Contrat Social*, which is well known to have exercised an execrable influence in the beginning of the revolution, is very inferior to the works of Sydney and Locke, from which Rousseau has largely borrowed, without saying a word about it. But the works of Locke and Sydney are cold and methodical, have never been much read, and have exercised comparatively little influence; while Rousseau borrowing so much from Sydney especially, expressed the same ideas in a language at once clear, fervid, and emphatic; so that their very violence, through his glowing eloquence, enraptured men, and won popularity. The *Contrat Social* became the Bible of the French revolution—its thoughts, words, and principles were in the mouths of all—it gave rise to that absurd and erroneous enthusiasm for antiquity, so prolific in the growth of parodies and crimes. A similar influence can never occur again; it is incompatible with the constitutional ideas of the day; and Benjamin Constant was approved by all when he said,* "*Je ne connais aucun système de servitude qui ait consacré des erreurs plus funestes que l'éternelle métaphysique du Contrat Social.*† But despite Rousseau's egregious fallacy, we must not forget that he says, a revolution, even the most just, would in his eyes be bought too dearly by the blood of a single citizen.

Voltaire died on the 30th of May 1778, and Rousseau on the

* Cours de Politique Constitutionelle, tome i. p. 329.

† [I know no system of slavery based on more baneful fallacies than the metaphysical theories of the Social Contract.]

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3d of July of the same year: thus those two rival and gigantic powers passed from this world nearly at the same time, and France was left to test the consequences of their different systems and opinions. The influence of Voltaire extended widely over general opinion, that of Rousseau worked on gifted natures and sensitive dispositions. The vast but superficial labors of Voltaire have never fired any ingenuous mind, or tended to produce a single superior man; yet he dazzled Europe; the whole of France invoked him as an idol, until the time came that a strong reaction sprung up, leading to the contrary excess. At the birth of the new literary school, when all were aiming at depth and originality, it became the fashion among the most eminent as well as among the shallowest to deride Voltaire. Of late years, however, he has been treated with more justice and reason. His literary merits have been acknowledged as they deserve to be, in a spirit equally remote from adoration and scorn, both alike preposterous towards such a writer. As to Rousseau, his political influence was happily of short duration, but the nature and tenor of his genius and works powerfully contributed to the formation of the new school of literature commonly known under the appellation of "Romanticism."

During the revolutionary convulsions of France, a young French officer, M. de Chateaubriand, was wandering in the wilds of America, and amid the gloom and sadness of his solitary exile, he found in Rousseau's works a reviving source of hope and consolation. M. de Chateaubriand's first work, dated London 1796, shows how much he was then imbued with the feelings and ideas of him whom he called *le grand Rousseau*, and whom he places among the five great writers that must be studied. His admiration of the eloquence of Rousseau seemed then blended with the impressions recently imbibed amidst the sublime scenes of the mighty continent he had visited; and he afterwards embodied, in his original and celebrated episode entitled *René* those vivid and mixed emotions, the outpourings of a soul steeped in melancholy.

The traces of Rousseau are palpable in Lord Byron. The British poet frequently seems, indeed, to have merely versified Rousseau's thoughts; but the character of his poetry more largely partakes of sensual sadness, of bitterness of spirit devoid of gravity, and yet deriving its richest colors from the splendid images of nature. The points of resemblance between Rousseau and Byron arise chiefly from imitation by the latter; they both had an intense sensibility of passion rather than affection; each

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of them has filled his works with evidences of his own character, has unveiled to the world the secrets of his own being—the mysteries of man's incorporated structure; they have penetrated to those depths which every one may sound for himself, though not for another; they have disclosed to the world all they beheld there, and have commanded a profound and universal sympathy, by proving that all mankind, the troubled and the untroubled, the lofty and the low, the strongest and the frailest, are linked together by the bonds of a common but mystical nature.

The literary influence of Rousseau is obvious in many of the great writers of the age. It would be easy to detect the traces of his eloquent prose in the first poetical effusions of the youthful and tender soul of M. de Lamartine. The exquisite sweetness of the *Méditations* is often shaded by the melancholy and regret so predominant in the gifted Genevese: the teeming emotions and picturesque images found in this work have clearly been inspired by Rousseau. The Abb': de Lamennais, likewise, one of the most powerful writers of the age, by his bold and decisive reasoning, by the impetuosity of his elaborated style, offers many points of resemblance with the author of *Emile*, whose enchanting language he enthusiastically extols, albeit professing towards him the direst hostility. It is evident that Rousseau was more the object of the abbé's studies during his youth than the holy fathers of the church; in the very page where he thunders forth against the philosopher's deistical opinions, there lurks a certain predilection for the infidel.

When the bloody storm of the revolution subsided, a few poetical voices began to lament the misery of the country, and to depict individual sorrows. Delille, in his graceful poem *La Pitié;* Millevoye, in his twilight strains; Michaud, the historian of the Crusaders, in his *Printemps d'un Proscrit*, portrayed the cast of sadness left on men's minds by the reign of terror. The poem of Michaud, in particular, from its fragrant sweetness, was hailed by the French nation as a halo of hope and consolation after the terrible scenes they had witnessed. The delightful works of Bernardin de St Pierre had also soothed the feverish and drooping spirit of France: *Paul et Virginie*, and the *Chaumière Indienne*, are perfect gems, which were eminently conducive in recalling the nation to softer emotions.

Under Bonaparte's sway, there was no time for literary progress; his incessant warfare was anything but favorable to the development of literary intellect, and a new literature, an *imperial* literature, could not rise suddenly at his fiat, as he

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actually desired, like a file of soldiers, the creatures of his will. Besides, the emperor's attention was more naturally drawn towards the sciences, and his reign became the era of scientific prosperity. The revolution had taken the lives of Lavoisier and Bailly on the scaffold; but Napoleon delighted to draw around him and to honor such men as Monge, Laplace, Foureroy, Berthollet, and Lagrange. Yet his endeavors to form a literary court were all in vain; or, at best, it could but enumerate as its members, Arnault, author of *Germanicus*, Lemercier, author of *Agamemnon*, both classical dramatists, and a few others of the same order. The two great literary names of his time—the two who have left indelible traces on the nineteenth century—were, heart and soul, hostile to the usurpation and tyranny of the conqueror. I refer, of course, to M. de Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël.

The noble and chivalrous character of M. de Chateaubriand deserves to be respected by all; and it is undeniable, that by his great work, *Le Génie du Christianisme*, France received a sacred stamp—a moral baptism, if I may be allowed so to speak, which the lower class of her literary population has vainly struggled to belie and to discard, by plunging into excesses most odious and revolting. But, on the other hand, it must be acknowledged that M. de Chateaubriand, in his life and writings, has strained too much after effect. His reason is generally the slave of his imagination and passions. Now, imagination, that indispensable faculty of poets, glories in contrast and display, great artificial exuberance, and melo-dramatic combinations; whereby in France, we confess, it is sure to command temporary popularity, although it greatly endangers the future reputation of literary productions. From the present tendency towards less fulsome and mawkish sensibility, those highly-wrought poetical prose compositions, in which political questions and philosophy are sacrificed to poetry, to imagination, and love of effect, have little chance of being handed down to posterity, or of retaining for any length of time the applause that has been so profusely lavished on them.

If we take, for instance, the two great influential works of M. de Chateaubriand—the two which, at the opening of the nineteenth century, awakened the French nation to pious feelings—namely, *Le Génie du Christianisme* and *Les Martyrs*, we find that the object of their author is not so much to vindicate the truth and sanctity of the Christian religion, as to prove that it is poetical and interesting. We search in vain for any edifying com-

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parison between paganism and true faith; the inquiry resolves itself into a consideration of Homer and Virgil on the one side, of Tasso and Camoens on the other. Thus the question, instead of being social and religious, becomes merely literary—a question of art and taste—nothing more. But, when we look to the beauty of his style, the gorgeous magnificence of his descriptions, the pomp and luxuriance of his phraseology, we are lost in admiration. M. de Chateaubriand must be acknowledged by all to be a most admirable painter, although sometimes guilty of exaggeration; but it may well be doubted whether he should be ranked among men of sound reasoning and profound thought. The true Christian thinker must be shocked to see the worship of our Saviour defended by flowers of rhetoric; to see paganism, with all its sensual idolatry, its voluptuous absurdities, favorably contrasted with the austere, pure, Christian religion, the eternal symbols of which are self-denial, suffering, and prayer. It is, indeed, matter of notoriety, that the ecclesiastics of Roman Catholic Europe universally expressed dissatisfaction with the very books that seemed to be written in the interest of the clergy.

If the works of M. de Chateaubriand had ever been free from this prevailing taint, the illustrious author's friends might contend that he adopted the only mode of making any religious impression on the country; that it was in fact necessary to appeal, in the first place, to the imagination of France. But during the whole of his life, and in all his works, he has been misled by poetry, imagination, and love of effect. Thus, in his *Essay on English Literature*, there are many sparkling paradoxical pages, written to prove that Luther had no genius, and that Roman Catholicism is more favorable to liberty than Protestantism. In his political life, he has generally been in opposition to the reigning power—a friend to the past state of things, and to visionary plans for the future. His works are a dazzling arsenal, where you find weapons for and against every system—in favor of and against liberty—for and against monarchy, constitutional freedom, and Bonapartism. His partiality for the wayward and eccentric leads him into the grossest errors. In his *Etudes Historiques*, for instance, he admits facts merely because they have a startling and original aspect: thus, he places among the Christian martyrs Apollonius Tyanæus, the most noted of charlatans, and allows the truth of the popular tradition which classes the Saviour of the world with the vile mob of pagan deities in the Pantheon of Tiberius.

While thus animadverting, justly, as we conceive, on the foi-

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bles of Chateaubriand, we must not forget that he possesses many great and shining merits. The mere fact of his admirers forming an almost countless host, sufficiently demonstrates his superiority in certain essential qualities of the writer; but if we were called upon to state where, in our opinion, he shines with undiminished lustre, we should point to his political pamphlets, especially to those written since the revolution of 1830. These are masterpieces of stirring eloquence and searching logic—here he really shows himself the creator of a new language.

Madame de Staël may be ranked among those great poets who are poetical only in prose, and who have had the misfortune to be imitated by a multitude of inferior intellects. Superiority is indispensable for the style in which she wrote; it is insufferable when attempted by ordinary minds, but is invested with an almost bewildering charm when wielded by the gifted amongst men —by Fénélon or Rousseau, by Jeremy Taylor or Burke.

Madame de Staël was endowed with a force and vigor of understanding, a power of psychological analysis, which gleam brightly even in her novel of *Corinne*, amidst a mass of unnatural, affected scenes, almost inconsistent with common sense. She stretched her faculties to seize and depict the secret and intimate emotions of the soul, pondering deeply on the religious impulse conveyed by Chateaubriand's devout and oriental imagery, and gave to the movement which he had already imparted to thought and feeling a powerful and happy stimulus. In short, she exercised an extraordinary influence over the literary revolution of the nineteenth century; nay, *she*, so eminently French in the chief characteristics of her mind and imagination, became the instrument whereby the sway of German genius has been partially rivetted in France. *De l'Allemagne* is the work by which Madame de Staël attained a literary supremacy in her own country; it, beyond all others, overpowered the baneful influence of that mocking spirit and depreciating illiberality, which in France had long tended to check and fetter genius, rather than to invigorate morals or good taste. In this result we perceive one of the most signal benefits accruing from those literary innovations, from which many others have doubtless sprung, various in nature and degree. Because many foul and noxious weeds may have followed endeavors to fertilize the literary soil of France, none assuredly would banish the fertilizing system; it is but the same condition of physical nature, where we behold the fairest flowers and most nutritious plants defiled and choked by the rank luxuriance of noisome or poisonous products. Would we, because

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such may be among the consequences of fertility, reduce the soil again to barrenness? The latter state excludes all hopes of amelioration; the former, while it gives ground for apprehension, supplies also abundant reason for gratulation and hope.

Madame de Staël, then, had the merit of having a great share in accelerating the change from the stiffness and pedantry of the classical style, to, if we may make use of the usual denomination, the romantic school; although we are of those who, being friends to the literary innovations of France, and despising any frivolous distinctions, feel that the literature of France must be, not classical or romantic, but national, in order to reach its highest development; and already this stimulus to originality has been imparted from many sources.

With the *Génie du Christianisme* of M. de Chateaubriand, the *De l'Allemagne* of Madame de Staël, and the happy invasion of English literature that began in 1815, France entered the path to religious tendencies, to philosophy, and to grave and profound studies. But, when the literature of a country is a heap of ruins, reconstruction is slow and laborious, and in the interval necessarily elapsing until the new edifice be raised, there is too ample occasion for a multitude of misfortunes and follies. Accordingly, we find that the light literature of France has teemed for these twenty years with monstrosities indicative of a most diseased and convulsive state of feeling. That part of literature is unfortunately the best known abroad, and it presents a mass of wild and fantastic creations not unlike the *Inferno* of Dante. Europe at large has protested against the immoral tendencies of the French dramas and romances of the nineteenth century, which Goethe called with great justice the "literature of despair." Light literature and the daily press in France have been of late years in such a state of degradation as could not be of long duration: the horizon is now clearing, and sanguine expectations may be indulged of amendment. "Of late years," says M. Sainte-Beuve,* "the public has been so often deceived; so many old things have been reprinted and given as new, so many flat and wretched productions, so many absurdities, have been highly praised in every way, that the public is positively become as inanimate as a lifeless body. A book is often composed of scraps from newspapers, with numerous blank intervals. There are many writers who adopt the form of dialogue to spare their brains, and many of the most fortunate ask two francs a-line in newspapers, and yet they

* Revue des Mondes, 1st September 1839.

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complain, contending that lord Byron was formerly more amply remunerated."

The literary profession has been made the prey of a youthful generation, which has undertaken to depict human life before having made the least acquaintance with it; to pronounce critical judgments, without possessing any qualification for forming an opinion; to lead and direct the public mind in detestable journals, reviews, and novels, when scarcely broken from the control of tutelage. What has been the consequence? There has arisen a turbulent race of youths, from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, ambitious, vain, frivolous, and indolent, swarming in all the walks of ephemeral literature, who, living in the heated atmosphere of forced and unnatural excitement, become worn out, the victims of premature decay and disappointment, in the flower of manhood, and thenceforth have no resource or solace but to bewail and denounce the ingratitude and ignorance of a country which has failed to remember and appreciate them. But, whilst drawing this stern and dismal picture, it behoves us to confine it within just limits, and to contrast it with a more cheerful sketch. It is with heartfelt satisfaction, then, we state that in the more lofty departments of literature, history, and philosophy, subjects which are least within the reach of the community at large, and, therefore, less generally pursued and studied, France can at the present time boast of a numerous body of profound thinkers. We must add, also, that in the province of the drama, but more especially of romance, there are many brilliant exceptions, full of promising hopes for the future. The rage for atrocious emotions, the degradation of these branches of literature, has not prevented the Christian and religious impulse given by M. de Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël from being continued and extended by many illustrious names: in the poetical world it has been promoted by MM. de Lamartine and Victor Hugo; in prose, by the Piedmontese Silvio Pellico, and by MM. Saintine, de Beaumont, and similar writers.

We have said that the progress of literary reformation is slow though inevitable. Let us, for example, cast our eyes on Germany, whose literature has so long taken an original character, but in the heart of which there still lurks a spirit of anarchy.

That literary regeneration now progressive in France began in Germany with Klopstock, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and with the rise of Shakspeare's paramount influence. The German and Christian bard shook off the old French authority, and placed the poetry of his country on the solid basis of

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religious feelings and national traditions. Science and faith were the wings that Klopstock gave to the poetry of his country. Next came Herder, with his comprehensive genius, who embraced all ages as if at a glance, thoroughly comprehended all civilizations, and threw a flood of light on the various phases in the existence of nations, a subject comparatively buried in the darkness of oblivion. These two great men were the first to enter the path which has since been made so wide by a glorious succession: yet German literature is still defective in unity and harmony. The labors of the great Goethe were too varied. Germany has cause to regret that he failed to establish the foundations of a national school. "Our literature," says F. Schlegel, "may be compared to a dissonance which has not yet been resolved." At the same time, tracing the course and origin of influences, it is curious to find that Klopstock owed much of his inspiration to Milton, and that even Herder, in his views on history, is not so uniformly original as has often been maintained. A man forgotten during a century, because he had come too soon —Vico, has of late years claimed his share of glory; when the world had reached the necessary degree of maturity to appreciate his ideas, mankind awoke him from his tomb. Vico, in his *Scienza Nuova*, may be esteemed the originator of that general and eternal history of the human race, wherein is comprised not only all that relates to physical, moral, and social development, but also all that belongs to philosophy in its vastest compass.

In England, Cowper, that melodious and pensive bard, was the herald of the most complete literary revolution that has ever honored a country. His glowing and lofty muse gradually obscured the cold and didactic school of Pope and Johnson. In this instance, also, the work of literary reformation was slow; for it is always so in proportion as that of destruction is rapid. In Germany it has not yet reached its finite point; in France, too, it is aiming to attain that height of originality and grandeur which will, in the lapse of time, be assuredly compassed. There the causes of literary aberration were derived from the state of society itself, which, after a great political convulsion, almost necessarily received an evil impulse and direction; but many pure and gifted intellects escaped the contagion, who are doubtless to be ranked as belonging to the nineteenth century. It has been very erroneously asserted that the new school of romanticism emerged from the barricades of the revolution of 1830; nothing can be more preposterous. That revolution operated as a mere shifting of scenery on a stage; it may have given an electric

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shock to the spectators, and quickened their intellectual energies for a moment, but it effected no substantial or enduring change. The great literary body, with its diversified virtues and vices, underwent no modification; many of the best productions of the nineteenth century are anterior to 1830, and all that can be admitted is, that a few obscure literary maniacs have taken advantage of the greater liberty of the press to give vent to their distorted conceptions; which is, we believe, the full extent of the change, as affects the literary character of France.

In offering a summary or introductory view of the present state of French literature, in addition to the few observations we mean to venture on the actuating characteristics of France, and on the part she is destined to take in the future civilization of the world, it is fitting we should advert, in distinct terms, to the powerful influence which England and English literature have, directly and indirectly, exercised in France.

Shakspeare, it is but a truism to repeat, is the master-spirit of modern literature; but the effect of his power has been most sensibly felt and manifested in Germany, through which it has reacted on France, independently of the more direct channel. Goethe has emphatically proclaimed the fact with respect to Germany, in his memoirs (*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, ch. xi.): "We should have remained firm," he says, "in the intention of abandoning ourselves to nature in all its wildness, had not another influence long previously disposed us to consider the world and its mental enjoyments from a more elevated and unconfined, yet equally true and poetical point of view. At first this influence affected us only in secret, and we yielded to it gradually; but we soon gave ourselves up to it openly and without reserve. Can it be necessary to add that I allude to Shakspeare? Does not this name alone render all further explanation needless? Shakspeare is better known in Germany than anywhere else, even better, perhaps, than in his own country."

The family of English authors whose influence has been most striking in France forms a very singular group—Shakspeare, Ossian, Young, Byron. And it is the ideas only of these authors, imperfectly conveyed through miserable translations, that can have had such a vivifying action. The influence of Shakspeare is easily understood: it has been so universal, that it was impossible for the country to come into the slightest contact with England without its being felt. But Ossian! how could Ossian be popular in France, even during the implacable wars that severed

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the two countries? It has always appeared a mystery, which we, however, are happily enabled to dispel.

When Bonaparte returned from his first glorious campaign in Italy, after the treaty of Campo-Formio, a sumptuous entertainment was given at the Luxembourg to greet his return. Talleyrand was appointed to address the youthful conqueror in a congratulatory harangue, and, among the numberless exalted qualities he extolled in him, the panegyrist emphatically commended him for his partiality to Ossian, then almost unknown in France. That the admirable Italian version of Ossian, by Cesarotti, was indeed the most favorite book of the young general, is, we know, an accredited fact. But it was then the fashion in literary circles to turn Ossian into ridicule, as has always been more or less the case; and there can be little doubt it was the intention of the crafty diplomatist, in his affected eulogy, to plant a caustic sarcasm, and to depreciate the hero by magnifying in him a meretricious taste. The result, however, was very different; the passion chimed in with the temper of the moment, and the whole nation began assiduously to read Ossian—not through the beautiful version of Cesarotti, unfortunately, but through a wretched French translation. Straightway, France became *Ossianic;* it was proclaimed that Ossian was the new Homer of the modern Alexander. The Ossianic fever, nevertheless, was not of long duration; the literary throne of the Celt tumbled when the empire of the Corsican passed away.

The temporary popularity that *Young's Night Thoughts*, a quarter of a century ago, obtained in France, is one of the most singular literary phenomena on record. Known only through the nauseous translation of Letourneur, which is not even a feeble shadow of the majestic grandeur of the original, the *Night Thoughts* suddenly mounted into the ascendant: every one read at least a fragment, and admired, or affected to admire. In our time, on the contrary, we see Young's solemn strains turned into ridicule, even by superior men;* and there are few indeed who seem to appreciate the greatness of his merits. Probably, the gloomy turn of the poems, however disfigured, suited the melancholy tendency of French society after the restoration of the Bourbons: peace and calm seemed heavy, after so much tumult and glory; especially a peace enforced by the presence of foreign armies on the soil of France. Still it is undoubted that the partiality for

* M. Villemain, in his *Cours de Littérature Française.*

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Young, however much derided, together with the *René* of Chateaubriand, the *Obermann* of M. de S[illegible]nancour, and the *Werther* of Goethe, first conduced to impart to the light literature of France that sentimental and despairing tone, which was afterwards carried to such excess by the prevalence of the Byronian fever.

The influence of foreign literature in France has been similar to that of Goethe's *Faust* on lord Byron's genius: in both cases, the influence exercised has been very considerable, although chequered by comparative ignorance of the great originals. Thus, lord Byron was unacquainted with German: Faust was verbally translated to him by Shelley and Lewis; and yet its spirit pervades many of his works, so deep were the traces it had left on his mind: indeed, to this indirect and imperfect knowledge of *Faust*, we are assuredly indebted for the creation of *Manfred*, a creasion to be placed by the side of *Faust* itself, and of its rival, *Wallenstein*. The peculiar sublimity of *Manfred* in many of its passages—the agonies, doubts, and aspirations of the chief personage, in which we discern, amidst the mazes of bewildering speculation, a mind struggling to seize the subtle elements of a purer existence—have invested the work with a character eminently adapted to stir the thoughts and emotions of men, even in cynical France.

Those who are acquainted with the French people, will readily comprehend the important results accruing from these various accessory influences, sometimes so singular and capricious in their origin, and at all times so imperfect; for nowhere has literature a greater sway over the community, through the perpetually increasing mass of readers. The nation at large is acquiring a degree of gravity unknown to former times: it would be a gross error to conclude the French nation in 1841 similar to what it formerly was, even during the restoration. Since the butcheries of the great revolution—since the closer contact of France with other countries—since the experience derived from so long a series of political commotions, the French character has been gradually changing. The French enter into literature, poetry, and politics, with their whole soul. Worldly advancement is more an Englishman's real study; regard for religion and good sense are his characteristics. A Frenchman, on the other hand, is devoured by a craving for glory: during Napoleon's reign, it fed on warfare; since that period, it has fastened on politics and literature, and in both has led to extravagances. Politics in England are not of so all-absorbing a nature as to become intimately blended with the national poetry, or they transpire only in the

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works of some of her bards, such as Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge; whereas in France, they are conspicuous through the whole range of literature. Politics and poetry are regarded with such interest, and deemed so closely interwoven, that each is more or less colored by the other. The influence of letters, as we have remarked, is one of the most potent influences in France. A great writer has always been, in France, a great power; even under Louis XIV., Boileau, Racine, and Molière, were the friends of the haughty monarch; and most of the greatest political characters of the nineteenth century have been, and are, literary men. It has often been asserted, that a man of science is not adapted for a politician. The maxim is equally narrow and false; inconsistent alike with past and present experience. If we confine ourselves to France, we have only to name Lavoisier, Laplace, Cuvier, Guizot, Arago; all equally attached to political and scientific pursuits—all illustrious in both.

Another great influence, comparatively unknown in other countries, but which has been most fatal in France, owing to its having extended beyond its natural, legitimate, and beneficial limits, is that of women. The influence of women has been at all times paramount in the nation, and the history of France teems with examples of its baneful effect. What chief of the *Fronde* is better known to us than the duchess of Longueville? The two darkest spots in the modern history of France—the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes—were owing to two women, Catherine de Medicis and Madame de Maintenon. Under Louis XV., the minister Choiseul was obliged to abandon the conduct of affairs to Madame du Barry; and the power and interference of Madame de Pompadour are matters of disgraceful notoriety. In another point of view, we may allude to the important parts played by Madame Roland and Madame de Staël during the French Revolution. We will not dwell, however, on particular instances, but merely add, that female influence has not been confined to the highest society and to politics; women in France have always occupied an important position; more adroit in their conduct, more quick in their perceptions, they have wielded an absolute sway over society at large. French women have constantly evinced a bold and restless disposition, and have established their independence and power on a more extended basis than elsewhere. So peculiar an influence must necessarily have materially affected the state of literature. We have seen the powerful impulse given by Madame de Staël; and, though this empire of women is on the

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wane in France, owing probably to the intellectual progress of the people, yet we behold in our own time, one who, by her glowing style and vivid imagination, stirs many hearts and minds in their inmost recesses—the gifted female Madame Dudevant, who writes under the appellation of George Sand.

We have spoken of the progress of France—of the bias she received from her neighbors, the natural result of unrestricted intercourse among nations—of the various changes she has undergone, and of her general intelligence; but, waving the egotism of nationality, every thoughtful mind must watch with an anxious eye the intellectual progress of all those nations upon whom depend, we may safely say, the future destinies of the world, as involved in civilization founded on Christianity, and in the diffusion of knowledge—two omnipotent agents of human welfare in times to come. France, England, Germany, and the United States, seem the appointed propagators of this Christian civilization, which, once spread and rooted, will be everlasting. The other Christian nations have not reached that state of intelligence, liberty, reason, and power, attained by these countries. France, England, and Germany, are especially the great leaders to progress; all the other nations imitate them. Germany, of all the regions in the world, is that wherein the sources of instruction are most liberally opened and wisely disseminated; but Germany is far from possessing the political perfection of France, England, or the United States. On the other hand, we believe that England has not yet acquired the social organization, or, we will venture to say, the impartiality of France, at the present period; and France must acknowledge the superiority of the British nation in public spirit, industry, and patriotic institutions. These three European nations, again, might learn much in political economy and toleration from the United States. Each has reached some point of perfection, and proves its advance by the test of invention; thus, each of them stands, in certain respects, at the head of Christian civilization—an example to other nations—the vanguard of humanity in its onward course.

It is consequently to be observed, that in this work of progress and Christian civilization, each of these nations has its particular characteristic vocation, since it excels in certain faculties, without being at the same time utterly deficient in others. France, it is undeniable, by her vivid intelligence, has powerfully contributed at various periods to enlighten the world. Nowhere, in fact, has knowledge been made so easy, so popular, and so accessible to all; in proof of which we might adduce many distin-

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guished names—those of Voltaire, Cuvier, Guizot, Cousin, Arago, for instance—in whose works everything, even the most recondite subject, is admirably perspicuous. Germany is more profound and learned; the perseverance of the German mind rivals the brightness of French intelligence. Germany cultivates, with laborious curiosity and prodigious memory, all the branches of history and science, but has hitherto failed in the art of imparting information in such a form as to render it directly conducive to the advantage of mankind. Germany may be said to collect the materials of ideas for the work of civilization; France to select from that heterogeneous mass in every department of thought, and to mould the matter into a new and more attractive shape; and England to put the result into action for the benefit of the world. Though France is more practical than Germany, she is considerably less so than England. When there is a new discovery, a new point of view, England is always the first to apply it, while France is content to talk about it for years. In England an idea is no sooner conceived than it is realized; theories pass rapidly from books into active utility; and though the same may be said with regard to America—for its people are of the same race, the same bent and disposition—yet it is somewhat too exclusively addicted to commercial pursuits.

Thus, nations are like individuals—each has its peculiar characteristic feature and faculty; and, therefore, when a nation excels in one thing, it is feebler in another. Hence arises that mutual dependence which connects so closely the three nations we are speaking of: Germany stands pre-eminent for laborious research, France for activity and perspicuity in development, and England for practical adaptation. Their intercommunication and reciprocal influence form the basis and mainspring of universal civilization. They are unconsciously linked in an identical cause; they are the three great members of an association truly majestic and holy, the design of which is the improvement of humanity to its utmost pitch of wisdom and refinement.

Let us return to our main subject, the literature of France in the nineteenth century.

The French nation has enjoyed two great epochs of intellectual development. It was taught to speak by the great writers of the seventeenth century—to think, by the philosophers of the eighteenth. The present epoch is distinguished as the era of reaction against the narrow dogmatism of the eighteenth century, and also against those restrictions of another sort which the eighteenth century had left in force. The stateliness, the conven-

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tional decorum, of the old French poetic and dramatic literature, gave place to a license which afforded free scope for genius and also for absurdity, and let in, as we have said, new forms of the beautiful and many forms of the hideous. Literature shook off its fetters, and used its liberty like a galley-slave escaped from bondage. We have stated that this insurrection against the old traditions of classicism was vulgarly called romanticism; and now, when the superfluity of garbage to which it gave birth has produced another revulsion in opinion, very beneficial results have flowed from it—results which will become more signal and transcendent as years roll on, and as the national taste and genius grow in solidity and originality.

It has always been a source of regret to us that the literary world has too much overlooked a department of letters, which in France possesses an abundant store of intellectual wealth, namely, scientific literature. As the limits we have necessarily assigned to our subject will prevent our entering into a dissertation on scientific literature, we will give here a brief outline of its character.

It is well known that England is greatly indebted to the labors of the French school for much of the information she possesses on subjects of a medical nature. It is well known that all questions, involving the most simple as well as the most complex organ of the human frame, are subjected in Paris to patient and persevering investigation, and are expounded, with strict adherence to the rules of inductive philosophy, by the first men of the age; that in France, more than anywhere else, medicine is cultivated purely as a branch of science, apart from all views of worldly interest.

But this is not all. Many of the illustrious men most eminently associated with the progress of medical knowledge, have written and spoken with admirable eloquence. Bichat, for instance, has conveyed his splendid discoveries in language scarcely ever surpassed for literary merit in the works of any nation. Andral, who is now at the head of the pathological school, is also a great writer. Bouillaud, in his last work, *Essai sur la Philosophie Médicale*, is full of interest, not merely to the profession, but to all classes and conditions of men. I have heretofore spoken of the fascinating style of Rousseau; and yet M. Lallemand, of the Faculty of Medicine of Montpellier, who has devoted his attention to the brain, is quite as great as Rousseau in narrative eloquence; having moreover the advantage of the Genevese philosopher in being of direct utility to mankind. M. Pariset, secre-

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tary of the *Ecole de Médicine*, who sought out and braved the plague in Egypt, possesses in the highest degree that impressive and plaintive eloquence which is so potent in moving the hearts of men. In his character as Secretary to the Faculty of Medicine, it is his province to deliver orations on the deceased members of the college. Among others, he pronounced the eulogium on Cuvier; and, towards the close of 1839, I had the fortune to be present when he read his *Eloge* of Laennec, to whom we are indebted for the first accurate notions on thoracic disease: on that occasion, the whole medical body, albeit usually deemed callous to tender emotions, was affected to tears. The oratory of M. Pariset, in truth, is of so lofty a nature, that I have often felt inclined to call him the Bossuet of the medical school.

Two other illustrious physicians, who, by their eloquence and masterly style, deserve to be ranked among the first French writers, are Cabanis and Broussais; but, by the nature of their works, they belong to one of the philosophical schools—the Physiological—and we shall have an opportunity of speaking concerning them when the philosophy of France becomes the subject of our observations. Cabanis flourished at the very commencement of the present century; Broussais died within the last few years.

In the science of chemistry, also, we find men endowed with remarkable powers of oratory and style. Dumas, in his lectures, keeps his audience rivetted in eager and breathless attention by the force and perspicuity of his language; and at intervals he quite enraptures the mind; as, for instance, when he vents his glowing enthusiasm on Lavoisier.* The Faculty of Arts of Paris, as it has been composed for many years, has no one so eloquent as Dumas; indeed, we may almost say that it does not possess one professor superior in a literary point of view to most of those of the *Ecole de Médicine*.

The mathematicians are also eminent for their rhetorical powers. Among those who lived at the beginning of the century, it is sufficient to enumerate Monge, Lagrange (in his *Mécanique Analytique*), and Laplace. The works of Laplace form, beyond all question, the most important contribution which has been made to the exact sciences since the publication of the *Principia* of Sir Isaac Newton. Distinguished alike by the elegance, the originality, and the depth of its analysis; by the sublime and imposing character of the subjects which it discusses; by the multiplicity and importance of its practical applications; and by the

* In his *Lecons de Philosophie Chimique*.

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luminous and elegant manner in which it presents the fruits of the profound researches of many successive generations of gifted men, the *Mécanique Celeste* of Laplace claims to rank among the most noble and imperishable monuments of the human intellect. It may be observed, that the works of Laplace can only command the unbounded admiration of the few individuals qualified to judge of their importance and difficulty; but, setting aside their highest merit, and regarding them merely as literary compositions, they will be found interesting in no ordinary degree. The felicitous manner in which the results of abstract science are translated into ordinary language; the perspicuity and elegance with which the most absurd and difficult subjects are developed and explained, render them perfect models of scientific disquisition.

Reverting to distinguished scientific contemporaries, if we take M. Elie de Beaumont in geology, the Jussieus in botany, and M. Arago, where shall we find more able writers? The little that M. Arago has written on astronomy has a peculiar character of purity and vivacity; and we know nothing more admirable or more interesting to every class of readers, than his *Eloges Historiques* of Carnot, James Watt, and Ampère. Moreover, France has been lately doomed to mourn the loss of another of her great scientific benefactors, who also possessed the same literary qualifications. Poisson, one of the most profound mathematicians the world ever produced, was an accomplished man of letters.

Surely the concoctors of those shallow publications, which issue so numerously from the press, and are so well known under the denomination of *Cours de Littérature*, *Leçons de Rhetorique*, *Modèles*, *Narrations*, and the like, are justly chargeable with ignorance in omitting all mention of such authors and all extracts from their works. Let us hope that a day will soon come, when, by the side of literary fragments taken from Bossuet, Buffon, Montesquieu, Chateaubriand, instead of the trash that now usually accompanies them, copious and instructive quotations from Bichat, Laplace, Cuvier, Pariset, Dumas, Arago, and others, will be given.

But can we dismiss the subject we have called scientific literature without pausing for a while on the great name of Cuvier, the man of universal genius, who has left on the nineteenth century, and through the whole range of creation, ineffaceable traces of his passage? Of all whose loss enlightened nations have had to bewail in this age, there is none who was more deserving of their veneration, who did more for the general benefit

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of mankind, who performed his duty upon earth more efficiently and with more marked effects, or left the influence of his labors more visible than the immortal Cuvier. Although there is Mrs. Lee's able book (*Memoirs of Cuvier*), in which her estimation of the writings and public services of Cuvier is expressed with delicacy, discrimination, and taste; and although that work has doubtless found many readers, I do not hesitate to say that Cuvier's scientific labors and extraordinary genius are not yet appreciated to their full extent in England. Comparative anatomy, upon which he has shed such lustre, is a subject that has been of late years studied by several distinguished men in England, and with great success; yet the medical profession generally in England does not seem aware of its intimate connection with human physiology, whereas a proper acquaintance with its real uses tend to show that there is scarcely a fact in physiology which has not been either suggested by it, or finally established by an appeal to it. Throughout Cuvier's works the most enlightened views of physiology are to be found, and from them may be learned those accurate and comprehensive ideas on the generation of disease which are attainable by medical science. When, on the other hand, we consider Cuvier as a legislator, his vast capacity seems fabulous. His memory was so retentive as to lose nothing that he read or heard, and his earliest studies had especially qualified him for the office. Besides the laws of France, which called his powers into action, he was likewise versed in those of other nations. When framing and issuing edicts, he always endeavored to explain the grounds of their enactment, conceiving that those who were to obey them would do so more willingly if thus enlightened. As President of the Council of State, it was his duty to await the deliberations of his colleagues on each project of law, and thereafter to sum up the opinions each had delivered; this he did with a rapidity and succinctness which often surprised the members of the council; and when it devolved on him to treat the subject, his elucidation flashed on their minds as a masterpiece of comprehension and knowledge. Once, in the Chamber of Peers, when a military question was mooted, and confusion ensued in the debate, Cuvier rose and solved the difficulty with the ease of a man who had passed his life in the study of tactics. Napoleon evinced his usual penetration in discerning Cuvier to be not a man of science solely, but a genius capable of adapting itself to all exigences. In 1814, the Emperor sent him on an extraordinary mission to the left bank of the Rhine, with instructions to take such

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steps as were best calculated to prevent the invasion of France. But it was too late. In 1818, Louis XVIII. offered Cuvier the ministry of the interior, which he thought proper to decline.

Cuvier's *éloges* (mortuary orations) alone would furnish subject-matter for very extended remarks. They are singularly fluent, and composed in a style remote from the inflated models of the disturbed period which had just passed away. Each of these discourses contains a simple and elegant account, accompanied by an instructive and profound analysis of the labors of the individual whom it commemorates; and these productions alone would have sufficed to establish the fame of any other man; but, emanating from the author of such stupendous scientific works, they are thrown of necessity into the shade. Nothing could surpass the elaborate eloquence of his lectures. Whether lecturing at the *Jardin des Plantes* on comparative anatomy—at the *Collège de France* on the history of natural philosophy—or at the *Athénée Royal* on subjects selected for a cultivated audience, accustomed to hear Chénier, Ginguen', Guizot, and others—he was always profound and never tedious. His great understanding seemed for the time to be communicated to his hearers; and he led them, without fatigue, to the comprehension of the most elevated and recondite views. The last lecture which he delivered at the *Collège de France*, on the 8th of May 1832, only the day before he felt the first symptoms of the fatal malady which terminated his life within the same week, was a review of the progress of science from the first formation of societies. I was present at this last lecture; and the remembrance of it will never be effaced from my memory. He treated the subject in so perfect and masterly a manner, and with so much sublimity, that I feel assured all his hearers, equally with myself, were impressed with the idea that we heard a commissioned interpreter of God's creation; and now that his accents are hushed, there has remained the solemn and affecting idea—the pensive and hallowed feeling, never to be lost—that we had been listening to him for the last time. When the death of Cuvier was announced, a momentary shock passed through men's minds, as if the very course of natural science must be arrested by it—under the circumstances, perhaps, a natural but assuredly a groundless apprehension—for the course of science can never wholly depend upon any individual, however wonderfully endowed. No private death, perhaps, ever occasioned a more deep, general, and permanent sorrow; although the year in which it happened (1832) was singularly fatal to superior intellects. In that year,

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three men of genius, whose glory will live forever in the annals of humanity, were snatched from the scene of their triumphs—three illustrious men, who have shed an eternal renown on the nineteenth century, and characterized their epoch—each in his several sphere and country—by imperishable evidences of creative power, in the most exalted regions of imagination and thought. Goethe, the deity of German literature, sunk into the tomb on the 16th of March; Cuvier on the 14th of May; and, after the lapse of a few months, Great Britain heard with anguish that the soul of the immortal Scott had also taken its flight.

Having noticed the various influences under which the intellectual progress of France during the nineteenth century has been developed, it will be now our object to give a preliminary outline of its several ramifications, which may be thus classed:—Intellectual Philosophy, Political Tendencies, History, Criticism, Romance, Drama, and Poetry. We mean to follow this classification, and to include in each of these divisions various branches of subordinate importance, such as, religious works, biography, and oratory. The departments above named are those in which we hold the intellectual state of a country is most perfectly and distinctly portrayed. In the course of our dissertations we shall endeavor to mark the development of national in conjunction with literary progress, keeping always in especial view the bonds that connect literature with religion and morality. We shall thus go beyond the field of what the Germans have so wisely called *æsthetic;* considering literature with reference to nature, taste, and philosophy, the only point of view in which the literature of a country can rationally be studied. Doubtless, literature, allowed its natural and almost illimitable compass, embraces all intellectual labors. With men of reflection, for instance, the principles of political economy are considered to partake of the nature of literature. In a well-digested essay on modern France, an important position belongs to the illustrious Jean-Baptiste Say, and to those who have followed him in that wide field of inquiry—Rossi, Blanqui, Michel Chevalier, and others; men whose works should be studied by those who are desirous of acquiring a complete and profound insight into the progress of the nation.

One of the revolutions which France has witnessed in her later literature, has occurred in a department confessedly of the

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highest importance, reflective also of the prevailing character of the times—Intellectual Philosophy.

The nineteenth century is conscious of a powerful reaction against the metaphysics of Condillac and Helvetius. The physiological school, called likewise the ideological, or sensualist, or materialist, was in full vigor at the commencement of this century, supported by the eloquent pens of De Tracy, Cabanis, Garat, Volney, Gall; and it found of late years a new and impetuous advocate in the illustrious physician Broussais. The writings of Locke and Condillac had already tended to banish *a priori* reasoning from moral science; and Cabanis, by developing the relation between the brain and the other viscera in the creation of thought and volition, had firmly fixed the groundwork of a system of mental phenomena, from which all gratuitous hypothesis should be wholly excluded. Rejecting the consideration of first causes, as being beyond the reach of experiment, the physiological philosophers confine their researches to the phenomena of mind; these they have found to be in dependence upon the physical condition of the organs by which they are manifested; and they have not hesitated to make the structure of man the basis of their inquiries into his moral nature. Every sensation and desire, they affirm, is a phenomenon which has its origin in physical causes, and is derived from laws of living energy common to the whole machine. To understand these causes, the animal structure, they say, must be analysed, and its modes of action ascertained; whatever can thus be discovered ranks amongst those unquestionable facts which constitute real knowledge. According to these physiologists, all ideas are referable to sensation, and without sensation there is no consciousness. With respect to the nature of truth, the greatest certitude we possess comes from individual reality—the reality of our being; and next to that, if not in an equal degree, from the reality of the external world. The knowledge of the external world is confined to phenomena; we cannot know anything of first causes, because, being first, they are not referable to foreign phenomena, by which alone they could be further explained. Demonstration is but the pursuit of an idea to its original source. Truth consists either in the conformity of language with itself and with the ideas of which it is the sign. To require a proof of the reality of sensation is sheer paradox. The senses of a well-organized individual, acting healthily, never deceive; the deception, when it exists, lies in faulty induction.

Such are the brief and imperfect outlines of the physiological

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school. It is distinguished, like all the other philosophical departments of France, for its literary excellence, and could not fail to become highly attractive and popular at a period when physical and natural sciences were making such rapid progress in the country. It, however, chanced to incur the displeasure of the First-Consul Bonaparte, and was soon after so effectually discountenanced by him when emperor, that it sunk into obscurity, never to emerge again save in the person of Broussais, whose fluent and energetic but somewhat arrogant language made but very few proselytes.

In the mean time, the religious impulse that marked the first part of the century had aroused, in more ardent minds, exalted religious feelings. In 1815, after the restoration of the Bourbons, M. de Maistre, who was for a long time ambassador at St. Petersburg, published his *Soirées de St. Petersbourg*, a work which has something of the ironical tone and elevation of Plato, and wherein the loftiest and most abstruse questions of human interest are discussed with admirable perfection and gracefulness of style. M. de Bonald had previously given to the public his *Théorie du Pouvoir Civil et Religieux*, which dealt a severe blow to the physiological school; and some years afterwards, the Abbé de Lamennais, having long attentively observed his epoch, surprised the world with his first volume on *Indifférence en Matière de Religion*, which created an almost unexampled sensation. These writers, together with M. Ballanche, are the great leaders of the theologic, or rather catholic, school of philosophy. It reckons many adherents of distinguished talent. The legitimist party belongs to it.

It is not our wish to speak disrespectfully of any system, any school, or any principle; there is not, in our opinion, a greater proof of ignorance than a readiness to depreciate; but we must nevertheless confess that the theologic school of philosophy is completely at variance with the present ideas of France. Everything in it is tinged with mystery. Without scientific foundation, it is built upon blind *faith* alone, in contempt of *reason:* nothing is demonstrated—everything is assumed and to be implicitly accepted. This school would form man for an inactive, ascetic, superstitious life—for submission to the theocratic yoke; it considers priests as the most natural, nay, the best statesmen, and the apostolic head of the Roman Catholic communion as the supreme sovereign. Surely nothing can be conceived more directly opposed to the spirit of our age; the political activity, the wants and habits of men, are now-a-days strongly adverse to such

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a system; and, moreover, the constitutional government, now so deeply rooted in France, is distinctly antagonistic to any system implying political submission to the papal see. The rancor of the nation against the Jesuits, those faithful champions of the sovereignty of Rome, affords conclusive proof that the triumph of the theologic school of philosophy could not be of long duration, and that its partisans form at present but a trifling portion of the mass.

Furthermore, it is instructive to know that, even among the members of this catholic school themselves, there exist strongly marked differences, more perhaps than are to be found among the adherents of any other system. Each has a particular cast of violence or toleration that distinguishes his views. M. de Maistre, for instance, may be looked upon as the type of its most unlimited and inexorable expression; whilst M. Ballanche, on the contrary, is a perfect model of purity, candor, and moderation. Despite his theosophic principles, the spirit of Fénélon presides over the works of the latter on social institutions, and over his *Palingénésie Sociale*, wherein momentous and attractive questions, on the progress of the human understanding, and on the destinies of humanity, are discussed with fervor and animation, tempered by an impartiality and mildness, seductive even to those who are disposed most sternly to reject his philosophical ideas. "In our opinion," said Professor Gans of Berlin (in the *Berliner Yahrbücher*, 1836), "Ballanche is the most perfect of contemporary French authors; in him are blended the antique purity and elegance with the depth as well as richness of modern times. The construction of systematical periods does not affect his thoughts; he proves that it is possible to form a new classicism in the midst of the present confusion of style among French writers."

As to M. de Lamennais, since 1834 he has thrown off the papal yoke, and by the publication of the *Paroles d'un Croyant*, *Le Livre du Peuple* has proclaimed a kind of religious catholic republicanism, which spread like a mania in France. He belongs to the theological school only by the great work that we have already specified.

During the latter years of Napoleon's reign, M. Romiguière was professor of philosophy at the *Ecole Normale;* and in expounding the systems of Locke and Condillac, he began to modify and simplify them in a very felicitous manner. After him came M. Royer-Collard, who used the authority of his powerful intellect to lead his audience from the beaten track of Condillac into the heart of the Scottish school, now very well known, but

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then obscure and unrecognized on the continent. A pupil of both these professors, M. Victor Cousin, having learned all he could learn in France, turned his steps towards Germany, where, after having made himself master of Kant's idealism, his enthusiasm was lighted up by Fichte, Schelling, and, above all, by his celebrated and attached friend Hegel. M. Cousin returned to France, his mind stored with the treasures of German thought. Shortly he, by a series of elucidations of the Scottish philosophy, more thoroughly to initiate his countrymen into the speculations of Reid and Dugald Stewart. From his chair at the Sorbonne he poured their molten gold into the same crucible with gems picked from the philosophy of Greece, of Germany, of the physiological and catholic schools; and lo! there issued from the fusion a virgin formula, accredited as the *Eclectic Philosophy*. This new school became instantaneously popular through the vigorous and persuasive eloquence of its creator, M. Victor Cousin, whose exertions have since been nobly emulated by MM. Jouffroy, Damiron, Bouillet, and others.

This Eclectic Philosophy—compounded of parts from all other systems, of such especially as are consistent with history, science, religion, and sound sense, and which, by their combination, explain and support each other—may be deemed a natural consequence of the introduction of the German and Scottish schools into a country from which the infidelity of Diderot and D'Holbach had been banished; which had fallen sick of the metaphysics of Condillac and Helvetius; and had subsequently become uneasy under the opposite extremes and systems of the physiological and theological schools. Eclecticism does not wholly reject any of these systems; it adopts, but greatly modifies, the idealism of Kant and the Scottish spiritualism; it retains sensualism, but narrows its agency; and acts in the same manner with the theological philosophy, essaying to shed a light on its mysteries, and to extract from them those simple and lofty truths which are of such deep moment to the interests of mankind. As was to be anticipated, the eclectic philosophy has been rudely assailed by all the other special schools, but chiefly, and with unparalleled acrimony, by the adherents of the theologic system. But, however much the apparently incongruous compound of various philosophies in the eclectic school may have provoked censure or sarcasm, it seems to us fitted to win very general approbation. The universal toleration it upholds, the very objection urged against it, its combination of all that is most precious in other systems, must render it a powerful instrument of co-

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operation in accelerating and cementing that holy alliance among nations, so long and often desired, and now happily progressing to accomplishment.

Through eclecticism it will be eventually established that the true and the false are everywhere co-existent elements, which it is the province of human penetration to analyze and dissever; in short, that the great study of man is to ascertain and separate truth from falsehood, to cull from out the chaos of opinions and doctrines what is genuine and conscientious, and to mould the whole on the broad basis of common sense, the only veritable rallying point. One who thus impartially explores his way through the labyrinth of human opinions, acts in the eclectic spirit; for it is the essential boast and characteristic of this philosophy to hold truth as its eternal aim, seeking it through every diversified and recondite ramification, and striving at all times to apply the surest tests of discrimination. Opinions, tenets, preconceptions, are thus passed through a severe but indispensable ordeal, and the mind of the inquirer must naturally arrive at sound and irrefragable conclusions. Moreover, there is a spirit of historic generalization pervading the eclectic philosophy, which would knit all tongues and nations in a primitive identity and brotherhood, and regard with tenderness the actions and systems of men, as fraught with that perpetual alloy discernible in all terrestrial things; for truth nowhere resides pure and unmixed within our mortal sphere.

For our own part, we are ready to avow a sincere conversion to eclecticism, not in philosophy alone, but in all things besides. Resting mainly upon enlightened and impartial investigation, upon candid discrimination and appreciation, it is well suited to interfere in the contests of criticism and to sooth their bitterness. By its means the classicist and the romanticist may learn to reconcile their different theories of the beautiful—the admirers of Raphael and Rossini to comprehend and allow that Rubens and Mozart may likewise be the objects of intense admiration. Thanks also to this eclectic spirit, the advocates of democracy will be taught to perceive that rational liberty may flourish under the ægis of monarchy; and the upholders of monarchy, that morality, stability, and happiness consort with republican institutions. Finally, the feeling, already extensively cherished, will grow in strength and magnitude, that philosophy may be made the handmaid of Christianity, not only without impairing its sacred influences, but serving rather to confirm and enlarge their saving sway.

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Philosophy will continue to hold its onward and glorious course; its association with religion will daily become more intimate; it will be more than ever rendered conducive to the welfare of humanity. Religion conveys, in a solemn and divine voice, the lessons of inspiration; philosophy explains them with the precision allotted to mortal comprehension; and it is the glory of our epoch to have understood this lofty and holy association.

After philosophy, political tendencies afford a striking and vivid portraiture of the intellectual state of a country, and an insight into its probable future destiny. In France, politics, philosophy, and literature, are, as we have previously observed, closely allied, and have moved forward in concomitant progress. Nay, many men have been eminent in each and all of these departments: thus, M. Royer-Collard, one of the most profound thinkers of the age, acted a conspicuous part for many years in the Chamber of Deputies. Belonging to the parliamentary opposition, the ministers of Louis XVIII. and of Charles X. often shrunk abashed before an orator unrivalled in the art of disentangling subtleties and of wielding the weapon of stern and inexorable logic. On the occasion of a general election, he was returned for seven different places at the same time—a signal proof of his political reputation. M. Cousin, as a peer of France, engages largely in politics, and was a member of the late administration. M. Jouffroy likewise has sat in the Chamber of Deputies for many years. In short, the whole of the present generation of Frenchmen meditate on politics, but with more comprehensive, and therefore more cautious, views of the past and present; bolder aspirations and anticipations are for the future. Since the restoration of the Bourbons, the nation has been intent on the means of enlarging its constitution and of limiting sovereign power in every way; indeed, whenever the throne has been obliged to yield, on whatsoever topic, a feeling of exultation has flashed through the whole community. At one period, during the restoration, the influence of Paul-Louis Courier's pamphlets and of Béranger's songs, seemed too great ever to be rivalled; but the political writings of M. de Cormenin have since proved that such an inference was hasty and erroneous. We mean to give an outline of the characteristics of those literary and political productions, casting an inquiring glance also at the Socialist hallucinations of St. Simon and Fourier—a theme not altogether devoid of interest and importance. Although such Utopian theories never enjoy a prolonged existence in France, more than anywhere else, yet Fourierism is certainly spreading

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for the moment, and its deluded proselytes, to the number of six hundred and fifty, have lately addressed a petition to the Chambers, soliciting the requisite license and authority to commence the establishment of their community.

But if I were called upon to specify the most perfect exposition of the present political philosophy and tendencies of the majority in France, I should adduce the *Démocratie en Amérique* of M. de Tocqueville as a work embodying the largest portion of the spirit of the time, however idle it may seem to uphold any particular book as a complete exponent of this philosophy. This work of M. de Tocqueville is one of the most striking and important that has appeared in France during the nineteenth century; it has exercised a very great influence; and it is needless to add, that it is our intention to analyze it with the utmost earnestness and care. The regeneration of criticism, in the hands of M. Villemain, and its present state in every department, will afterwards be the object of consideration, and will be found calculated, we trust, to command attention.

But it is, above all, in history and historic disquisitions that the new tendencies of France and of the national mind have been most rapidly and strongly exemplified. Historians, before the nineteenth century, for the most part confined themselves to a certain class of facts, not always choosing the most expressive, overlooking religious and political institutions, arts, and industry, content to indite a narrative comprising battles, the principal events of a monarch's life, and the rise or fall of empires,—all of which are usually the consequence and signs of an intellectual movement. Such historians account for any great period of prosperity or conquest by ascribing everything to the intervention of some wondrously endowed individual; their great men are prodigies in action, and humanity is but a cipher. How silly do these inflated demigods now appear to us, as extolled in earlier chronicles, left as it were in solitary grandeur by the studied omission of those concurrent influences that tended to upheave them into pre-eminence and to illustrate their era! We do not mean to depreciate the qualities of great conquerors and of great men generally; but, as they are represented by historians, they appear almost of too dazzling a lustre for mortals to contemplate. Happily for the dignity of truth, we are now verging towards the period when all men shall be made aware that these blazing meteors of history were but symbols of latent agencies, divine and human.

The historians who first introduced an account of manners and

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institutions, effected a revolution; they were looked upon as having penetrated to the foundation, and were hailed as philosophical historians; but in truth they had only reached secondary causes; the main and primary causes were to be traced in intellectual development or the succession of ideas, a system of treating history that will eventually exclude every other. The first improvement in history, therefore, resulted from a more profound study of the chronicles—prolific sources of information, when studied with discrimination and sagacity—such, for instance, as M. de Barante has evinced—for they are often erroneous;—Froissard, in particular, repeatedly gives a wrong interpretation and a false color to the events of his time. The second and last improvement so nobly worked out in France, is founded on searching investigations into the nature and effect of laws, into hitherto forgotten muniments or characters, and, above all, into the evidences of the progressive march of the human mind.

It is from history that civilized nations should receive their best and most useful knowledge. At all times, philosophy has directed its principal efforts to the elucidation of those mysteries which involve the destiny of man; but it is only recently that historical science has ventured to tread a similar path—to propose for solution the great problems touching the collective destiny of past generations, the universal destiny of the human race. Thus, science has endeavored to discover the laws that regulate the human intellect in its secular developments, and to explain its regular phases. Such is the course on which the most eminent historians of France of the present day have entered; the same in which the profound genius of Vico and Herder found occupation, and Bossuet manifested his high capacity. Never was a conception of greater magnitude, or evolving more generally fertilizing principles, started in the vast arena of science and of human discussion. This century, the object of so many anathemas and so many stupid calumnies, has given to history a soul and a spirit, by connecting it with the supreme and universal jurisdiction of Providence. This age proclaims the ruling power of the Deity over all time; it gathers the divine breath that has swept over the dust of generations and the ruins of empires; it distinguishes, through the accumulated clouds of twenty centuries, the barriers which limit the obscure path followed by the human race in its long pilgrimage. It is in this sense that the nineteenth century illustrates and investigates history. This is something more than a mere revolution in science; it is the germ of a great revolution in the mind of man. Insight into the principles of

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civilization will become the motive and excitement to higher perfection; civilization will aid the propagation of Christianity; and thus the temporal and eternal happiness of mankind is bound up in its unfettered progress. Hence, we may account for that taste, or rather that mysterious instinct, now urging so many eminent minds to incline towards the study of history, which, we may add, promises in their hands to become a new science.

History is now connected with all branches of literature: the poet and the philosopher rank as its tributaries; it animates and enriches every subject within its scope, even the most abstruse and laborious, such as antiquities, philology, geology, and geography, as the last is understood and expounded by the learned Karl Ritter of Berlin. The higher it aspires, the more expansive becomes its influence; it embraces the two poles of human intelligence, imagination and science.

France abounds, at the present moment, with distinguished historians of the class now alluded to: the names of Michelet and Capefigue are familiar amongst those of its leaders; and even Chateaubriand and Ballanche may be deemed precursors of Guizot and Augustin Thierry. Previous to the present epoch, France was very scantily provided with historians. Mezeray had sketched extremely well—but merely sketched—some parts of the reigns of the French monarchs; the Père Daniel had written the military part of French history; and the President Henault had composed his *Abrégé Chronologique*, a work which has always been overrated, as much as, on the other hand, the *Essais* of Voltaire have been always undervalued. The researches of Velly, Villaret, and Garnier, likewise have their value, although they never understood the physiognomy of any age. Velly, in fact, is often absolutely ridiculous; his *Khlovigh* is sketched on the model of Louis XIV., and all his kings are alike. The works of the Abbé Millot scarcely deserve the name of histories: the frigidity of their style, and want of historical knowledge, would now strike the most superficial reader. The history of France, in short, could not be written before the revolution. All the works previous to that period are of little use; they are mostly calculated to mislead and deceive; their authors did not go to the proper sources, or when by chance they did so, they misunderstood and misinterpreted them. An exception, however, must be made in favor of the *Histoire de l'Etablissement de la Monarchie Française dans les Gaules*, by the Abbé Dubos: it has supplied an abundant store of very excellent materials.

We have read—and the anecdote is well known—that, at the

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Lincoln Cathedral, there is a beautiful painted window, which was made by an apprentice out of pieces of glass rejected by his master. It is so far superior to every other in the church, that, according to the tradition, the vanquished artist killed himself from mortification. Thus it is that Sir Walter Scott has appropriated fragments scornfully rejected by historians. Out of gleanings left by them to moulder, he has constructed works which will never cease to charm. But the French historians, De Barante and Guizot, have reclaimed those materials which the novelist had appropriated, to apply them to a more useful purpose. They have exhibited the history of government and the history of populations, in that form which is alone fitted to present a just and indelible picture: had it been so with the English historians, the student would not have had to look for the history of the Puritans in Clarendon, for their living portraiture and characteristic phraseology in *Old Mortality*, or for a true idea of king James and his times in the *Fortunes of Nigel*.

An intimate knowledge of the domestic history of nations is absolutely necessary to the prognosis of practical events; and this was more especially felt and understood when the Waverly Novels appeared to challenge universal admiration; for it is to be noticed that some among them—*Ivanhoe* particularly—which in England were merely read for amusement, powerfully contributed to the formation of the modern school of history in France, and led avowedly to one of the most celebrated productions of the age.* M. Augustin Thierry, whose Letters on the History of France first gave the new impulse, mentions this interesting fact. Finding in the pages of *Ivanhoe* remote events for the first time brought home as realities; startled to perceive what had been hitherto contemplated in dreamy abstraction painted in the glowing colors of life; Saxons and Normans, as they existed in the reign of Richard I., recalled from their long oblivion—men began to awaken to a sense of the value, in illustrating history, of antiquarian lore, when illumined by a spirit of philosophy. Straightway the annals of France, England, and other countries, were systematically searched; the characteristic features of society and life at each period were gathered out and exhibited in histories and works of historical fiction. M. de Barante composed the history of two important centuries in the annals of France, after the style and from the materials of Froissard and Philippe de Comines. M. A. Thierry's researches into the early history

* *Histoire de la Conquete de l'Angleterre par les Normands*, by M. A. Thierry.

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of borough communities, brought to light some of the most important facts touching the progress of society in France and throughout Europe. While MM. Thiers and Mignet, in a style worthy of the ancient models, but with the inferior philosophy of the time, recounted the recent glories and sufferings of their country, other writers, following the steps of Herder and of Johannes von Müller, the historian of Switzerland, analyzed the facts of universal history, and connected them by generalizations (which, if unsatisfactory in many respects, assuredly cleared up much that was before abstruse and inexplicable, and presented points in a new and striking light); and M. Guizot, excelling all in comprehensive range of thought and historical impartiality, gave to the world his immortal essays and lectures.

We may here mention, as a proof of the palmy state of French historical literature at the present time, that, of the most interesting period in the English annals—the period of the Stuarts—France has produced, within a very few years, the three best histories: the first being the unfinished *History of the English Revolution*, by M. Guizot; the second, the *History of the Counter-Revolution in England*, by Armand Carrel; and the third in merit, M. Mazure's *History of the Revolution of* 1688, a work of much greater detail, and also of less extensive views, but which embodied a large quantity of fresh matter and information derived from Barillon's papers and other sources, and is unexceptionable in point of impartiality.

The modern school of French historians may be divided into three distinct sections. We are not generally partial to such divisions and subdivisions, being convinced they are in a great measure useless, and must be necessarily marked with many exceptions; moreover, the characteristics of each must pass away by degrees, and be totally effaced in the course of time. There can be no question that an epoch will come when there will be but one manner of writing history—a manner which shall blend the most judicious parts of the different systems—in fact, eclecticism applied to history.

The first class of French historians may properly be, and is by a great number, called philosophic, because their labors are principally devoted to the philosophy of history. MM. Guizot and Sismondi are its leaders. They relate events, not so much for the purpose of presenting an animated description, as in order to arrive at and illustrate conclusions which may serve as lessons for the future governance of mankind. History in their hands ceases to be simply amusing; it is sternly instructive. The Eng-

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lish language possesses some good specimens of this class of history; the most remarkable are Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, and the works of Mr. Millar.

In the second class of French historians, history is written merely *ad narrandum*, and consists in a simple narrative of events and a picture of manners, diversified with frequent episodes, leaving the reader to form his own judgment. This is the descriptive school, and it boasts a most brilliant specimen in M. de Barante's *History of the Dukes of Burgundy*.

The third class of historians, headed by MM. Thiers and Mignet, is the celebrated Fatalist School, in which facts are recounted, omitting details. Here we have the history of the human species marching at random, irrespective of individuals, who, on the contrary, remain impassible in presence of vice and virtue.

We have said, when speaking of Voltaire and Luther, that they were in some degree the mere instruments, agents, or representatives of their time—the impersonation of the ideas of their epoch; and also, speaking of great men generally, we said that, to know them, we must discover the basis upon which they stood, and the contemporaneous influences that worked out their pre-eminence; but we did not mean to maintain that events—and above all, political events—are never, in no degree, influenced by the character of individuals. But historians of the class now under our notice exclude all individual influence; doing so to such a degree, and ascribing so much to the influence of what they term circumstances, meaning events unconnected with the conduct or wishes of any mere individual, that it has certainly very justly acquired the appellation of the fatalist school. By some, indeed, writers of this order are called political, because they relate recent or contemporary events, and thus re-act, by the color they give to those, on present political conditions and feelings.

It is almost unnecessary to add, that each of these historic systems has engendered numberless exaggerations; for such is an inevitable consequence. Thus, descriptive history, so judicious, brilliant, and instructive—so full of discrimination—in the hands of M. de Barante, is sullied by a mass of imitators, whose abortive productions belong to the domain of neither history, romance, nor biography, but shine only as examples of odious and unutterable dullness. And the works of MM. Thiers and Mignet have hatched a swarm of *Jeunes Frances*, vociferating, in their wild aberrations, emphatic eulogies on Marat, Couthon, and Robespierre, and breathing a love of blood and destruction, which they denominate the progressive march of events.

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If the influence of Sir Walter Scott's works has proved so beneficial to historical studies in France, it has, on the other hand, been comparatively unsuccessful on the novelists. With the exception of some truly historical novels by MM. Alfred de Vigny, Frederic Soulié, Mérimée, and a few others, the mass of trash in the shape of historical novels is excessive and deplorable. Happily, public indignation has been so loudly expressed as in some degree to circumscribe the mania, and we may hope that it is verging to an end. The department of romance, considering the immense number of novelists, has hitherto been unfortunate in the nineteenth century. In England, it is true, it has been admirably cultivated, in different spheres, by the author of *Philip Augustus*, of *Richelieu*, etc. and by the author of *Eugene Aram* and *Ernest Maltravers;* but France has seen with sorrow her novelists plunge into a world of unnatural horrors, and produce works justly stigmatized as nauseous and odious, although professing loudly to imitate Walter Scott, the model of perfection in historical romance.

It seems, indeed, a rare privilege that the fictions of the immortal Scotsman should purify the soul while they charm the imagination, when we consider his imitators; but it may be alleged, in extenuation, with respect to France, that those gifted men who were best fitted to follow successfully the traces of the Scottish author, have generally turned their attention to purely historical pursuits.

Sir Walter Scott is a magician more potent than Le Sage; he has touched all things as if with the rod of enchantment; and it would be impossible to calculate the multitude of those who have derived from him some of their purest and most delicious enjoyments. From his glorious example, we might expect that in the present day a romance writer would propose to himself higher objects than the mere narration of a tale or the excitement of vivid emotions by exaggerated pictures of the horrible; that he would endeavor to arouse in our hearts lofty and noble aspirations, and so depict our bad passions as to teach us to abhor and govern them; that he would endeavor also to expand our hearts—to render the circle of our feelings and affections wider and more comprehensive—to store our minds with images bright, and sweet, and beautiful—to bring us more philosophically acquainted with the character of our fellow-men—in short, to dismiss us from his pages wiser and with a more perfect appreciation of all that is good and great. Such ought to be the objects of a good romance writer—objects which most of the French novelists, it must be

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confessed, seem to have completely overlooked or most successfully avoided.

But can Walter Scott be incontestibly proclaimed the inventor of historical romance? We doubt it. The History of Alexander the Great by Quintus Curtius, may be considered as a mere historical romance. The *Chronique de Turpin* produced as great an effect in its time as the Waverly Novels in ours. *Le Roman de Brut* also may be mentioned in the same category. But it is of little consequence. Walter Scott's regeneration of historical romance—if regeneration it be—is more meritorious than invention itself, for he soars far above all that preceded or have followed him. Meissner and Weit Weber have tried the historical novel in Germany, and Manzoni in Italy, besides the multitude of imitators in France and in England; but none can be put in the balance with the immortal author of *Ivanhoe;* no one has possessed the skill and knowledge of the antiquarian in combination with the genius of the poet. The majority of these imitators, indeed we may say nearly all, stray into a wilderness of overexcited passion. Not one is found endowed with the nice discrimination or keen insight of Sir Walter Scott, one of whose greatest charms is his distinct personification of character, diversified as it is through his numerous volumes with manifold traits; equally master of the ludicrous, the stately, and the pathetic, he moves at will to merriment, solemnity, or pensiveness. No variety of nature has escaped his observation, or failed to be illustrated with the similitude of truth.

As we have previously intimated, sundry bright exceptions exist among the French novelists. Moreover, in another species of romance which has lately come into vogue, there are several beautiful and finished models, though, as usual, alloyed with most wretched imitations. These are mostly of a nature, however, not easily relished in foreign countries, owing to the great difficulties they present in the excessive *finesse* and delicacy of their descriptive language. As an example, we may adduce M. de Balzac's *Scènes de la Vie Privée.* Although we sincerely deplore the immoral tendency of Madame Dudevant's first works, yet it would imply sheer folly and prejudice not to acknowledge that her graphic powers have never been surpassed. We have much pleasure in stating, at the same time, that this tendency has happily ceased, and that feminine feelings have at last arisen in her distorted mind. A natural reaction has occurred, and her last masterly compositions can be perused without dread of having the pleasure resulting from her glowing diction and stir-

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ring ideas clouded by the intrusion of impure and unnatural thoughts.

A very original French novelist, who is popular in France in a certain class of society, Paul de Kock, has been proclaimed by certain English critics as the first writer of his time and country. Nothing can be more ridiculous. Such an opinion could only be entertained by foreigners, who are probably beguiled by the easy and sparkling pictures of real life which he draws in so lively a manner; for it proves great ignorance of French literature. Paul de Kock's subjects and portraitures are drawn only from the lower class of society, and there is great similarity in most of his productions. Ranking him so highly as these English reviewers have done, is exactly as if we in France were to exalt the works of Charles Dickens above *Ivanhoe*, *Philip Augustus*, and *Eugene Aram;* and yet, sooth to say, we think *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* very superior to any thing Paul de Kock ever wrote. There often lurks in the works of Charles Dickens a profound morality in the midst of his harrowing burlesque, if I may thus express myself, which gives them a high coloring and value.

If we seek another instance of a work of fiction that can never awake in foreign readers the feelings of admiration which it universally excited in the land of its production, we fall, of necessity on the *Notre Dame de Paris* of Victor Hugo. In this remarkable work there is doubtless much to shock and to offend —passages wherein the author's intention to raise violent emotions provokes simply disgust. But, allowing for this drawback, the singular raciness and vigor of its descriptions challenge unqualified applause. It aroused in the reading public a passion, amounting to enthusiasm, for the middle ages. The spirit and effect of the tale itself have been seldom comprehended out of France; the interest, both of description and narrative, is essentially local, resting principally on the ancient state of Paris, and the monuments yet remaining of the mediæval times in the centre of that capital, but, of course, more or less unknown to foreigners; consequently, the charm of the work is in a great measure unfelt by them. A Parisian, on the other hand, regards it as the romantic history of his own capital—of that city which is to him all the world—the great object of his pride; and, as every one in France yields implicitly, especially in literary matters, to the fiat of Paris, the success of the book was complete throughout the whole country. Paris is to a Frenchman what England is to an Englishman. There is hardly a dissentient

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voice among the authors of the day concerning the locally descriptive part of the tale. The historian Michelet has called Victor Hugo "The mighty master who has made Notre Dame his own!" And M. Didron, in his *Cours d' Archéologie Chrétienne*, when alluding to the influence of Chateaubriand and Victor Hugo, says, that in promoting a love for the study of the arts and monuments of the middle ages, M. de Chateaubriand laid the first stone of the pier, but Victor Hugo completed the bridge over which the whole nation is now in full march. It is only since 1830 that this reaction, so to speak, has taken place, and that the attention of the government to the works of art and to the remains of the middle ages has been awakened. Previous to that period, a deplorable spirit of Vandalism prevailed in France, leading to the neglect, and even destruction, of ancient monuments; and it is only during these last ten years that successful efforts have been made to counteract so barbarian an irreverence for antiquities, and that earnest activity has been displayed in resuscitating and cultivating the fine arts of every kind. The new government of 1830 appointed an Inspector-General of Monuments, whose duties were efficiently performed by M. Vitet, and are now fulfilled with no less zeal and diligence by M. Prosper Mérimée. The municipal councils, and other corporate bodies throughout France, have likewise been induced to turn their attention to the various remnants of the olden time surviving in their respective jurisdictions.

The remarks previously ventured on the modern school of novelists, are even more applicable to the dramatists, except that the imitations of Sir Walter Scott have really produced several very estimable compositions. In the drama, imitations of Shakspeare and Schiller being the mania of the moment, they have been attempted by some of the principal men in France. Shakspeare and Schiller are names in the mouths of all, although their works are understood, I fear, by a very small number; and, under the counterfeit likeness of those immortal models, monstrous absurdities have been exhibited on the stage. Victor Hugo, above all, the poet who has enriched the literature of his country with the loftiest strains of the lyrical muse, seems purposely to have debased his genius by many unnatural, immoral creations as a dramatist. It is evident, from the prefaces to his plays, that he thinks himself the creator of a new dramatic art —of a new era. In his preface to *Marion de Lorme*, he even asks, whether he may not hope to be to Shakspeare what Napoleon was to Charlemagne; of a verity implying thereby that he

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hopes to be the Shakspeare of France. This expectation, and the works it has tended to bring forth, are strangely anomalous; but the singular fatality or blindness of the man is a subject of deep regret—the more so, that, in the midst of his deformed and extravagant conceptions, ever and anon some brilliant sparks of genius are emitted, worthy of Corneille. Victor Hugo was one of the first to assert the propriety, and to uphold the improvement, of introducing history on the stage; and a rational hope might have been then indulged that the historical drama was about to rise in France, with all its rich and graceful attributes; that the example given by Shakspeare, and in modern times by Manzoni, would be successfully followed. But it was otherwise destined. Victor Hugo, despite his protestations, has depictured characters meet for idle curiosity only—that are of no country or time, and which, in conjunction with the whole texture of his plays, incontestibly prove either great contempt or ignorance of history; and yet he knows that, from Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, down to Shakspeare and Schiller, adherence to historic or traditional truth has never been deemed too tight a restraint on the genius of the poet.

The productions of other dramatic authors are of the same description, but destitute of the brilliant passages of Victor Hugo. The principal exceptions that may be mentioned are the *Henri III.* of M. Alexandre Dumas, and the *Marèchale d' Ancre* of M. Alfred de Vigny. M. Casimir Delavigne, in his tragedies, has preserved a medium between classicism and romanticism: they are written with purity, but are unsuited to the French taste of the present time.

An almost unprecedented fecundity in another sphere of dramatic composition—one of less importance in the eyes of literary men, has been exhibited by M. Scribe. M. Scribe is the author of a vast number of comedies and *vaudevilles*, and of almost all the *librettos* of the operas and *operas comiques* performed in France. All he has written during these last twenty-five years bears the stamp of the same exquisite taste. He had scarcely reached manhood when he began his career as a dramatist. His name is one of the most popular in France and throughout Europe, for his vaudevilles and plays are translated and performed every where: in the former he displays an uniform graceful satire and a perfect knowledge of society. All the shades of worldy superficial sensibility are there portrayed in a form always elegant, refined, and placid. His comedies are often profound in the delineation of human foibles and passions;

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some of them, *Bertrand et Raton* and the *Camaraderie*, for example, will long remain as finished models of their kind. His poetic compositions for the opera are always dramatic, and often exhibit a sweetness of poetry very rare in those unnoticed lyrical plays destined to accompany the strains of the musician. In short, the success that has attended the whole of M. Scribe's countless compositions is unparalleled in the annals of the stage. His inexhaustible facility may almost be considered one of the wonders of the nineteenth century; it has justly ensured him an immense fortune and the highest academical honors. M. Scribe is one of that small number of men, who, from their great popularity, from being so much admired and spoilt by the public, can afford to laugh at all critics and all criticisms.

Poetry has been as usual cultivated in the nineteenth century by a multitude of petty versifiers. France is perhaps the country where mediocrity is the most prone to rhyming; but the highest kind of poetry, as it is understood by all the great poets of our epoch, has been successfully attempted by a very small number in comparison with the many immortal voices that have been heard in England and Germany during the first part of this century. It would be ridiculous and idle in our time to give a dignified place to that superficial versification which delights in the delineation of frivolous emotions and joys, or in bewailing the ephemeral and contemptible sorrows of passion. Poetry of the first order expresses but one thing, the inquietude and pangs of the soul brooding over the great problem of human destiny and futurity; this is the sole theme and object of all great poets.

This poetry of the soul has blazed with immortal splendor in England and Germany. In France, also, it has fired several poetic muses. The lyrical strains of M. de Lamartine will never cease to charm; whilst those of Alfred de Vigny, and, above all, of Victor Hugo, may in general be deemed perfect specimens of psychological poetry. But in France poetical prose has deprived poetry of many noble inspirations; and at the present time it seems even to be forsaken in the very fields where its growth was the most signally favored. Goethe, Schiller, Körner, have no successors in Germany. England is still more inactive, more prosaic, since the glorious days of Byron, Campbell, Coleridge, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Southey; and France beholds with pain the latest production of one of her most eminent lyrics, M. de Lamartine, lamentably turgid and distorted in fancy; this last poem, *La Chute d'un Ange*, has greatly periled his exalted

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poetical reputation. M. de Lamartine thinks it his duty and destiny to abandon poetry for politics; and M. Victor Hugo likewise sadly neglects his lyrical genius, to follow his favorite idea of creating a Shakspearian drama. They both strangely mistake their mission.

The fact is, that, to all appearance, we are witnessing the decline of poetry. Prose is gaining ground every day, and is in preference adopted by poetical men; in their hands the prose of the heart enlightens, touches, nay, arouses and teaches, perhaps more than poetry. But is it to be assumed as a consequence that poetry will cease to flourish? No: experience belies the conclusion; reactions always follow; and though England and Germany, with their rich stores, may perhaps look on with indifference, it cannot be so with France. France possesses at present no epic poem; but it is almost certain that one must eventually emerge from her vast and confused literary world. After her heroic history—her epic spirit for these last forty years—the generations that follow will inherit all that bygone efforts and innovations have produced; and the great, ever-revered models of other nations being daily more known and studied, and grafted on the eternal bard of Greece, there will surely result a national poetic monument, worthy of the nation and of its history.

The literature of France, in its present state, is altogether incoherent and imperfect. Some of its branches are in a splendid state of progress, others fearfully wan and defective. The drama and romance, for instance, are a perfect chaos. Modern French literature is a strange, fantastic, wild medley of light and gloom; the consequence of the state of society itself, which is yet unsettled, tumultuous and febrile, as we have already observed, after a great political but ill-directed movement. Nevertheless, from out this vortex many powerful, noble, and gifted intellects will undoubtedly arise. The labors of divers contemporaries are in harmony with the epoch, it is true; but taste will be purified by experience; others will be hailed at a future period who are known to be devoted to the highest subjects of human interest; and as art is multiform, and as none of its expressions are to be suppressed when they emanate from nature, others again will rise, but isolated in their thoughts, and devoted to calm and measured beauty, to the perfection of thought, and the excellency of language.

Finally, we believe that France is advancing towards her ultimate destiny, which promises to be as great as her past suf-

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ferings, commotions, and hopes. She is advancing towards it through an era of trials—a period of expiation, perhaps, during which human ideas and general intellect are wavering in uncertainty. Her literature is the perfect image of the national anxiety and anarchy. We see in it individual thought reaching its utmost limits, accompanied by various excesses, owing to the absence of a recognized barrier, of a social bar and spirit of unity, that would keep it in its proper and befitting confines; but times of unity, of prosperous fertility and perfection, will follow.

France, social, literary, and political, in her present state—with her efforts to attain new forms—a complete regeneration adapted to her wants and genius—reminds me of the Satan of Milton, marching through the dark abyss to discover a new world. He is assailed by feelings of discouragement; fantastic apparitions rise before him; he rolls in the abyss, to rise and roll again; but at last he sets his foot on the gigantic bridge that leads from the realm of darkness to that of light; and then in those dark regions a distant ray shines:

> "At last the sacred influence
> Of light appears, and from the walls of heaven
> Shoots far into the bosom of deep night
> A glimmering dawn."

He then sees the pendent new world hanging in a golden chain, fast by the empyreal heaven, "with opal towers and battlements adorned of living sapphire;" after wandering again, he reaches the new creation, and

> "Then from pole to pole
> He views in breadth, and without longer pause
> Down right into the world's first region throws
> His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
> Through the pure marble air his oblique way
> Amongst innumerable stars."

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CHAPTER SECOND.

INTELLECTUAL PHILOSOPHY.

Intellectual Philosophy at the close of the Eighteenth century.—Physiological or Sensualist School. — Cabanis—De Tracy—Broussais. — Theologic or Catholic School.—M. De Maistre—his Works.—De Lamennais—De Bonald—their Works. —M. De Ballanche—Character of his Works.—Le Baron d'Eckstein.—Formation of the Eclectic School.—M. Laromiguiere.—M. Royer-Collard.—The Scottish School.—M. Cousin—his Development of Eclecticism.—Philosophic Elements of Human Nature.—Outlines of M. Cousin's Doctrine—his Analysis of the Mind, Reason, Ideas, etc.—Observations on the Subject.—Destiny of the Eclectic Philosophy.—Merits and Genius of M. Cousin.—M. Jouffroy and his Works.—M. Damiron, etc.—Refutations of the Eclectic Philosophy.—M. Pierre Leroux—his Philosophy.—The Book entitled *Refutation de l'Eclectisme*—its Arguments and Defects.—Admirable Advantages of Intellectual Philosophy, and of the Eclectic School.

In France, during the eighteenth century, the most noxious philosophical errors held sway—a perfect contrast being offered in that respect to the following and present era, which is, as will be seen, and as can be easily demonstrated, wise, salutary, and religious, in its general philosophical tendencies. The revival of physiological principles in metaphysics some years ago, fostered with great zeal and eloquence by the learned Broussais, was but transient. It is not our intention to expatiate on the physiological school; the outlines we have given of that doctrine will suffice, the more so, as it may be said, we repeat, to have expired with Broussais two years ago. We will merely say a word on the group of eminent men whose works rendered it popular during the first part of the nineteenth century.

Cabanis, an eminent physician, had been the friend of Condillac, whose system he embraced, and considerably enlarged. His celebrated work, *Rapport du Physique et du Moral*, published in 1802, is one of the ablest productions of this school, and is written with remarkable elegance; at the time of its appearance, it was greeted with almost universal acclamation. It propounds a complete physiological explanation of the moral faculties of man. Cabanis died in 1808. About eight years after his death, his celebrated friend Destutt de Tracy completed his illustrations of the connection between the physical and moral faculties of

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man, and further extended the domain of the system, by the publication of *Elements d'Idéologie*. De Tracy became the metaphysician of the school of which Cabanis had been the physiologist. His *Elements* commanded at the time a general and rapturous admiration, although, now that Condillacism has fallen into disrepute and oblivion, they are almost forgotten. We should, nevertheless, vainly seek elsewhere for greater compass of language, or more admirable skill in reasoning, albeit on false principles; and the temporary popularity of this school is easily accounted for, when we find its doctrines expounded and illustrated by such eminent teachers, at a time too when brilliant discoveries in natural and mathematical science attracted, in a more than ordinary degree, public attention. It is, at the same time, undeniable, that physiological principles, professed and upheld by men of such powerful intellects as Cabanis and De Tracy, have been advantageous to the cause of philosophical inquiry; for thereby psychologists have become accustomed to the minutest analysis and investigation of details: as, for instance, in our own time, M. Jouffroy teaches us to know that the functions or operations of the soul may be examined and analyzed with as much nicety as anatomical facts. This merit of the physiological school was owing principally to M. de Tracy; and the illustrious Schelling was undoubtedly alluding to it, when he spoke of the gratitude with which the learned world must ever honor the memory of M. de Tracy. All the works of M. de Tracy, from the one above named, and including those on political economy, down to his last, *Commentaires sur "L'Esprit des Lois" de Montesquieu*, published in 1828, bear the same stamp of superiority and profound research.

A system that reckoned Volney among its leaders could not long remain popular, for the religious tendency of the age was arrayed in opposition to it. Volney was endowed with brilliant faculties, undoubtedly; his whole life was devoted to study, and he evinced both his thirst of knowledge and his courage by braving the privations and fatigues of a desolate journey in the remote east; for many months, with a view of mastering the key to oriental dialects, he remained immured in a convent on Mount Lebanon, partaking the coarse and scanty diet of its ascetic inmates; and, after all this, he returned to Europe and told his countrymen, in his book *Les Ruines*, that all religions were a mere human invention; and in his *Catéchisme*, that the duties of man have no other basis than self-preservation—that is to say, egotism! Such principles, carried to an extreme repugnant to

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the innate convictions of the human mind, provoked an outburst of indignation and hostility, and eventually proved fatal to the physiological school.

The physiological school had also been successfully vindicated, during its prosperity, in the brilliant and eloquent lectures of Garat in the *Ecoles Normales*, and strengthened by the works and system of Dr. Gall; but after a while it began gradually to decline, and ultimately disappeared with the formation of the catholic and eclectic schools. For many years it had existed only in the remembrance of men, merely shooting forth an occasional flash, instantly to vanish—excepting perhaps in the case of M. Azais, whose works and lectures acquired a partial and temporary influence—when it was suddenly revived with startling clamor. In the height of the triumph of eclecticism, a physician of genius, who had followed the French armies from Madrid to Moscow, Dr. Broussais, broke into the philosophical arena with the fury of a man too late for the combat: at first he amazed all by the eloquent violence, the unexampled impetuosity, and fierce earnestness of his principal work, published towards the end of 1828, and entitled *De l'Irritation et de la Folie*, wherein the physical and moral faculties are established on the basis of physiological induction. It involved even more than a renewal of the system of Cabanis, infusing into it new life, decking it in more vivid colors, and expressing the loftiest disdain for all reigning doctrines.

Broussais, when presenting himself as the restorer of the school of Locke, Condillac, Cabanis, and De Tracy, went beyond his celebrated predecessors. In his eyes the physical structure of man constitutes the whole of man; he does not distinguish a spiritual element as distinct from the material substance: in his idea, not only all instincts, all passions, all thoughts emanate from the viscera, the nerves, and the brain, but in them also reside all causes; thus, with Broussais, sensibility is an effect of the nerves, passion is the action of the viscera, intellect a cerebral secretion, and self-consciousness a general faculty of living matter. The work was ably reviewed and severely criticised, but with exemplary temper and calm reason, by the Duke de Broglie in the *Revue Française*, and also by M. Damiron in his essay on French Philosophy during the Nineteenth Century. Broussais's explosion startled for a moment the thinking world of France, but it failed to leave any lasting impression; things quickly reverted to their former state, and the great physician's renown shrank within the limits of the *Ecole de Médicine*.

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One of the most succinct, clear, and graphic accounts of Broussais, is contained in the *éloge* pronounced at the Institute of France, on the 27th of June 1840, by the historian Mignet. He thus sums up the character of that extraordinary man:—"His mind, which was quick, penetrating, strong, and creative, was deficient in the essential of rigor; he did not always propound his problems well, and often contented himself with imperfect solutions, because he observed shrewdly, but concluded hastily. To inquire and believe, to affirm and contend, were with him necessities; he knew not what it was either to doubt or to hesitate. Thence arose at once his imperfections, his talent, his power, his success; he thence derived a style beautifully animated and free, glowing, copious, unequal, vigorous; he thence drew the inspiration of those works which interested not only as the exposition of his ideas, but as the echo of his feelings, for he threw into them both his views and himself."

I have said that the catholic or theological school, and the eclectic, were reigning together in France; but the sway of the former is partial and confined, exercised obscurely, and suffering diminution by the loss of its great prophets and propagators; whilst that of the latter, on the other hand, is in triumphant progress, and incessantly extending its actuating influence: its doctrines are propounded from all the philosophical chairs in the universities of France, and thus are widely diffused among the rising generation, which, in intellectual culture and development of faculties, justifies the sanguine hopes entertained of the beneficial consequences of eclecticism.

After the age of incredulity, crowned by the great revolution, a partial return to religious feelings was natural, accelerated, as we have seen, by the powerful impulse derived from the works of M. de Chateaubriand; but the violent, exclusive, absolute catholic doctrine could not, any more than sensualism, have been revived, at the time of the introduction of the foreign schools, had it not been adopted and accredited by many men of superior endowments. I have already intimated that the essence of the doctrine of the catholic school consists in passive obedience to the pope—an acknowledgment of his absolute temporal as well as spiritual authority.

One of the most celebrated and influential masters of this theological school, M. de Maistre, has given to his works a singularly attractive form. In his *Soirées de St. Petersbourg*, which is most generally known, he discusses the loftiest philosophical questions with all the charm of colloquial elegance and

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perspicuity; the vivacity of his reasoning, the profusion of his arguments, the eloquence of his style, half fascinate the reader, even if, in heart, sceptic and hostile to his system, and perchance frequently moved to anger by the peculiar arrogance of his tone. M. de Maistre may, in some respects, be compared to Montesquieu; he has treated his subject, the Roman Catholic Church, in the flowing, easy style, and with the multifarious learning, of the great author of the *Esprit des Lois;* he has evinced the same keenness and profundity of observation, but, unfortunately, lacks the nobleness of soul and elevation of thought, which would complete the parallel. Of M. de Maistre's works, the best known are —*Du Pape; Considérations Sur la France*, in which he depicts, in a manner worthy of Dante, the horrors of the revolution, and the consequences of licentious liberty; *De l'Eglise Gallicane*, explaining its connection with, and allegiance to, the Church of Rome; together with the one above named, entitled *Les Soirées de St. Petersbourg.* All these works belong to the first twenty years of this century—they all breathe the same spirit of unqualified papal absolutism.

The year 1817, in addition to M. de Maistre's book on the Pope, was signalized by the appearance of the first volume of the *Indifférence en Matière de Religion*, by M. de Lamennais, whose name acquired immediate fame. The sensation caused by this volume arose, in a great measure, from the bitterness and the speculative boldness which characterized it, and from its manifestations of an irregular, incoherent talent:—"The style of the essay on Indifference," says M. Sainte-Beuve, in his *Portraits Littéraires*, "possesses in the highest degree the beauty inherent in the subject: grave and nervous, regular and vehement, without meretricious ornament or mere worldly elegance, the diction is serious, convincing, urgent, oblivious of rules, obedient only to thought, measured in words and tropes, reflective only of the intentness of its aim, illumined only by an internal and ever active fire—there are numerous chapters which appear to us the ideal of theological beauty. Those who assert that the style of M. de Lamennais wants unction, have not uttered with him those humble and beautiful prayers with which he interrupts at intervals, and strengthens his ardent contemplation; they have not taken into account that intense moral consciousness, which, free from the austerity of precept or censure, will still betray the secret tenderness of the heart."

This work on Indifference touching Religious Subjects, has nevertheless been very severely treated by many French critics,

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who, however, have evinced great learning and sagacity in their criticisms; they leave on the mind an impression of their justice and candor, whereas we can find nothing to extenuate the gross abuse heaped by some of the English reviews on M. de Lamennais and others, whose failings are exaggerated, and their merits either not understood or not acknowledged. These critiques bear on the face of them evident marks of a superficiality, which is truly unpardonable in the present epoch: surely the spirit of enlightened criticism does not comport with lavish, undiscriminating invective, applied without one sensible observation to relieve the ribaldry: every dispassionate mind must reject with indignation a course of proceeding so inconsistent with reason, fairness, and good manners.

All who have read M. de Lamennais's works with attention, must have perceived in them the vivid outpourings of an ardent soul and soaring intellect, blighted in their original freshness and purity by some heartbreaking calamity—the offspring, perhaps, of cruel sacrifices in the cause of duty—and deeply tinged, moreover, with disdain for all the materialism of this world. Doubtless, there has occurred in the history of that soul some mysterious harrowing episode. It would seem as if his impetuous genius, driven by the burning gale of passion, had eagerly bounded towards religion as the only object that could promise it rest. His ambition was also directed to redeeming the Christian faith from the darkness of indifference and oblivion, and reviving it, with all its pristine strength and efficacy, in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen. In this point of view, we may account for his vehemence, for the paradoxes into which he is betrayed, for the singularity of ideas, the exaggerated eloquence, and the melancholy tone of sadness, which by turns distinguish his works. Their perusal, we think, will often compel a sigh, but never provoke an insult: it is as if we communed with a noble, gifted, and fervent spirit, torn and ruffled by storms, which loses at intervals, in delirious excesses, the pious, tranquil serenity that befits hallowed and subdued emotions.

A tendency to uphold liberty of thought in alliance with religious faith, might always be detected in the works of the Abbé de Lamennais; but at last it became incontestibly palpable in his daily paper *L'Avenir*, where he expounded and inculcated his opinions; so that, in 1834, the unequivocal censure of the whole Catholic communion induced him to repair to Rome, in order to submit his doctrines to the judgment of the pope. They were sternly condemned; and the discomfited apostle of Roman Catho-

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licism returned to France, and buried himself for several months in deep seclusion and silent meditation, whence he emerged to discard openly the papal yoke, to proclaim boundless freedom the surest prop and ally of the Catholic religion. In truth, he developed the elements of a republican theocracy; and, as generally occurs in similar innovations, he carried his new ideas far beyond the necessary limits, vehemently invoking and exhorting the poor to rise against the rich, the weak against the strong and powerful. Some of M. de Lamennais's publications, imbued with this new spirit—especially one entitled *Les Paroles d'un Croyant*—met with an astonishing circulation; but we shall have occasion to speak of them more at large elsewhere. Thus it has happened that M. de Lamennais, since 1834, no longer belongs to the catholic school of philosophy, but rather to the political world. He is now, as well as M. de Chateaubriand, the prophet of republicanism; with this difference, that his constitutional ardor hurries him to the verge of demagogical fury. He has violently attacked the measures of government, and been no less violently treated by it; for he has been condemned to several years' imprisonment, and to a heavy fine. His last work, *Esquisse d'une Philosophie* (3 vols.), embodies, skilfully and eloquently, the whole of his politico-metaphysical doctrines.

M. de Bonald is likewise to be ranked as one of the ablest and most successful defenders of the catholic philosophy, the more so because he is characterized by a temperate and calm yet forcible strain of reasoning. The tenor of his works, it is true, has been more particularly political, but he has also approved himself a powerful adversary of the physiological school; none ever denounced with greater talent that system which levels man to the grade of the brute, by inferring in the senses the origin of all ideas. He exposes, by a luminous train of deductions, the fallacies of that doctrine, and portrays its attendant excesses and anomalies in a striking light. And whereas in all sciences a fact acknowledged as true serves as the basis of induction, M. de Bonald seeks that fact in the region of metaphysics, and labors to establish the divine origin of language, or the faculty of speech. The point at which he aims is, that it is utterly impossible for man to have created the power of articulation and speech; and on this conclusion, assuming himself to have established it, he takes his stand in all his metaphysical reasoning. It is to be deplored that M. de Bonald's ideas are sometimes, in their attenuated ramifications, full of confusion. His logic is in general very forcible, but we are often reminded of the leaf of gold beaten out into an

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interminable thread; at times its brilliancy is almost imperceptible. His principal works are—*Sur Divers Sujets* (1818); *Mélanges Littéraires* (1819); *Législation Primitive* (1821); and *Recherches Philosophiques* (1826).

But it is M. Ballanche whom we are to regard as the great luminary of this catholic philosophy, although his opinions breathe such a kindly and truly Christian spirit, are so pregnant with words of comfort, hope, and mercy, that we feel repugnant to place so amiable a man in the same category with the stern and inflexible De Maistre or the intemperate De Lamennais. M. Ballanche, like M. Buchez (who, in an inferior degree, is also a supporter of this school), is not an austere and orthodox, but an historical and philosophical advocate of the catholic system.

M. Ballanche appears in the light, not of an unforgiving partisan of the Catholic Church, but of a Christian inspired with feelings of benevolence, indulgence, and tenderness; he is to his religion a dutiful and reverential son, but he endeavors in every way to soften her severity and to restore her truly Christian character. All his works are marked by the most touching sympathy for his fellow-creatures; and the encouragements he gives them glow as if with prophetic fire. Not that he attempts to follow the flight of the eagle, with its scorching glance and harsh, wild scream; on the contrary, he is mild as the dove; all his words are formed to console; the atmosphere he breathes partakes of the purity and calm of another world. In his eyes humanity is not in a benighted state, with but a small number of elect; he does not admit that final difference in eternity between the strong and the feeble, the high and the low, the just and the wicked, maintained by M. de Maistre. No: M. Ballanche believes implicitly that virtue will daily multiply its proselytes, and extend its influence; that Christianity will by degrees diffuse its blessings over all created beings; and that the whole human race will one day be bound together in ties of brotherhood, and be universally good and happy. His heart expanding with such convictions, well may he exclaim, addressing M. de Maistre: "You are as inexorable as destiny, and not merciful like Providence"—"You are the Jew of the ancient law, and not the Christian of the law of grace"—"You are the apostle of the past, and not the prophet of the future." His work on social institutions, and his greater publication, entitled *Palingénésie Sociale*, in which the highest questions in the philosophy of history are discussed with masterly comprehension, place him among the most eminent of political writers, and entitle him to rank by the side of Niebuhr

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as an historian; both works are written in a genuine poetic feeling and spirit, blended with a political, philosophical, Christian mysticism.

M. Ballanche is as full of charity and unction as Fénélon and Silvio Pellico, and often transcends each of them in spiritual elevation. His name is familiarly known, though frequently uttered with a species of mysterious reverence; for the lofty themes of his speculation surpass the understanding of numerous worldly readers, who are nevertheless imbued with feelings of awe at the lustre and purity of his fame. Out of France his works are unknown, save to a few distinguished men; and even in France they are not so generally read as the extraordinary merits which distinguish them would seem to ensure. For this an all-sufficient reason may be found in the transcendentalism which, as it were, veils his thoughts from the eyes of the vulgar, and in the Greek expression he has given to the effusions of his mind. All taste for the antique has disappeared in the new France of the nineteenth century, and the public will not take the trouble to search for what wisdom and virtue might be found concealed under such a title as *Orphée* and *Antigone*, and others of the like character which he has given to different portions of his works. Moreover, M. Ballanche is one of those modest and retiring men who seek to avoid notoriety, and he is a perfect stranger to all those tricks and subterfuges, to that *charlatanism*, to which so many literary reputations are chiefly owing. His life has been passed in privacy and contemplation. It is related of him, that once at Lyons he remained three years, and in the heyday of youth too, from eighteen to twenty-one, without stepping beyond the threshold of his room. All the faculties of his soul have been absorbed in the sincere desire of teaching the truth to men, of impressing upon them some of those salutary lessons that might lead them to a better and happier state; and if he has encountered obstacles in his path, they have arisen from his want of worldly knowledge and energy—from his modesty and love of retirement. Now that he is in his sixty-fourth year, those causes naturally operate more powerfully than ever. Yet, upon the whole, we scruple not to declare him the most poetic philosopher and prose writer of the nineteenth century.

In a periodical publication of great merit, edited by the Baron d'Eckstein, called the *Catholique*, which for many years supported with infinite talent the doctrines of the catholic school, we find a masterly and elegant sketch of M. Ballanche's characteristic. M. d'Eckstein was a native of Denmark, and established

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himself at Paris in 1815. This learned foreigner's criticisms belong to the highest order of such productions; and, although an upholder of the theological school, his views are of a very liberal tendency—for instance, he is friendly to the liberty of the press. But the extension of the catholic school has not been solely promoted by the periodical press, as in the *Catholique* of the Baron d'Eckstein, and in *Le Sémeur;* the pulpit has also exercised some influence—the warm, stirring eloquence of M. Lacordaire, and the magniloquent discourses of M. de Ravignan, have drawn thousands of the youth of Paris around them in Notre-Dame. We may safely infer, however, that a large proportion of their auditors are attracted more by the rhetorical powers of the preachers than by any fervid participation in their theological opinions.

But to return to M. Ballanche:—"In reading his works," says the Baron d'Eckstein, speaking of his *Palingénésie* (Feb. 1828), "an air of candor, almost of virgin purity, unknown to writers since Saint-François de Sales, and which Fénélon himself did not always possess, charms and ravishes the mind. The malignity of the over-rigorous or incredulous might sometimes deride, as indicative of too simple a benevolence, the confidence with which he trusts in the greatness of the future destinies of the human race—the earnestness with which he draws the flattering picture; but the profoundness of the religious ideas which inspire him, is his excuse and strength. Without that, we might be tempted to class him among those philanthropists, who are so peculiarly sensitive and witless, that their imbecility has passed into a proverb. Such a decision would be unjust and erroneous. The writings of M. Ballanche reveal the inmost depths of his soul, and resemble those waters of pure crystal whose transparency permits the observer to behold the farthest recesses of the marble reservoir which holds them. Nothing can be more touching than this intimate contact, this perfect acquaintance of the reader with the author. You study M. Ballanche, and straightway you are his. An invisible spell, an insensible allurement, entrance you, when you would subject him to your criticism. Such is the potent charm of beauty in a woman, of fragrance in a flower, of the angelic smile of childhood. Reason, the imprescriptible right of human nature, asserts its claim to be heard; but it fears to startle, by too stern an accent, so gentle a soul. Half disarmed by the purity of the writer's strain of thought, and striving to defend itself against seduction, it is prepared to in-

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scribe these words on the frontispiece of the new work of Ballanche—*a work of errors and of truth.*

Profoundness combined with elegance, a style pure and melodious, like the sinuous wave which, with a soft murmur, bathes the roots of flowers, views often remarkable for great compass, and, in particular, a defect of vigor, less in the form than in the substance of the thought—such are the merits and deficiencies of his works. He never hovers over his subject, never penetrates into its inmost depths; but he identifies himself with it, and, in his transport of ardor, he wanders in his own conceptions, to arise thereafter redolent of generous and lofty ideas."

Now let us advert to the eclectic school. *It* we may call emphatically the philosophy of modern France; for, we here repeat, the influence and progress it has gained since the evanescent triumph of the catholic school for a few years succeeding the restoration of the Bourbons, has been signally rapid; it seems, indeed, destined to mark a new era in the annals of human intelligence. Most of the first eclectics were originally disciples of Condillac.

MM. Laromiguière and Royer-Collard, formerly of the sensual school, struck the first blow at the narrowness of Condillacism. The former, by establishing a difference between the sensation and the idea—by showing that the sensation is to the idea what the block of marble is to the statue—extended the sphere of intellectual activity, and analyzed its powers and laws. Two or three years afterwards, that is to say, from 1811 to 1814, the latter, enlightened by the works of Reid, and dissatisfied with sensualism, began apparently to modify its principles, while he was working its complete ruin. Royer-Collard renewed against Condillac the objections which Reid had directed, with so much good sense and force, against Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. To his translation of Reid and to his *Fragments*, together with the works of De Gérando and Romiguière, may be attributed the introduction of the Scottish philosophy into France; whilst it is especially to him, and latterly to Jouffroy, that the Scottish philosophy is indebted for a full acknowledgment of its merits, and for the high and increasing estimation in which its doctrines are now held on the continent. Royer-Collard, whose authority and genius have in every relation been exerted for the benefit of his country, and who, once great as a professor, has been no less illustrious during his long career as a statesman, advocated in his lectures, with the distinguished ability that marked all his efforts, the principles of the Scottish school.

The eclectic impulse, having thus been given, was followed up

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with more or less zeal by many distinguished men of the time. M. de Gérando, in the second edition of his great monumental work, *Histoire Comparée des Systèmes de Philosophie*, greatly modified his philosophical ideas. M. Droz, in his work, *De la Philosophie Morale, ou des Différents Systèmes sur la Science de la Vie*, which he gave to the public in 1823, avowed a complete abjuration of sensualism. The same may be averred of M. Maine de Biran in his latter years, as is warranted by his learned article on Leibnitz in the *Biographie Universelle*, and his work entitled *Nouvelles Considérations sur le Physique et le Moral de l'Homme*, which he left at his death in 1824, and which was published in 1834 by M. Cousin, with a remarkable introduction. Sensualism was also opposed with success by MM. Berard, Virey, and Keratry; and, at a later period, with equal effect and a more decided eclectic disposition of mind, by MM. Massias, Bonstetten of Berne, and Ancillon of Berlin. The two last-named foreigners, who have written their philosophical works in French, are doubtless the heralds of eclecticism in their respective countries.

But the genuine and perfect eclectic philosophy may be said to have begun with, to have been created by, M. Victor Cousin, already dear to scholars for his translation of Plato. If M. Cousin is not strictly the creator of this school, his bold and vast additions to it come very near creation; and he is therefore the most perfect type of the present state of intellectual philosophy in France—of the doctrine so justly called eclectic, which professes to embody and reconcile the soundest portions of all other philosophical systems. M. Cousin claims with great justice the glory of placing the key-stone in the arch of science, by the discovery of elements hitherto unobserved among the phenomena of consciousness. His labors have been of such a nature that even those who regard M. Cousin's attempt to establish a general peace among philosophers by the promulgation of his eclectic doctrine or theory as a failure, must acknowledge his distinguished talents, and feel respect and admiration for his love of truth and his reliance on the faculties of man.

Hence it is meet that we pause a moment upon Cousin. When Royer-Collard relinquished philosophy, on which he had thrown many a luminous ray, to enter political life, he intrusted his professional chair at the Sorbonne to his favorite scholar, Victor Cousin. The young professor proved himself deserving of his master's confidence; he successfully explored the comparatively limited field of intellectual philosophy then known, but with a

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boldness and freedom of thought that alarmed the reigning power, and under the Jesuit ascendancy he was condemned to silence. He passed eight years in honorable retirement, studying Germany and German thought. It opened a new world to him. On his return to Paris, he again ascended his chair of philosophy, and the splendor of his lectures, the extraordinary sensation they excited, justified the expectations which his recent reputation as a writer and the memory of his earlier lectures had inspired. Two thousand auditors listened in admiration to the eloquent exposition of those German doctrines, at first unintelligible to the many, but soon after widely adopted and diffused through the celebrity and talents of the professor. M. Cousin was one of that glorious triumvirate who electrified crowded audiences, and aroused a feeling of enthusiasm throughout the whole of France —M. Guizot by his lectures on civilization, M. Villemain by his brilliant discourses on French literature, and M. Cousin by his orations on philosophy. All three adorned at the same time the faculty of letters of Paris, and excited an interest and sensation quite unexampled in France since the days of Abelard.

We propose to give a rapid sketch of the philosophy of M. Cousin, and to inquire briefly into what he has positively done for the advancement of intellectual science. His genius, alike brilliant and profound, has given a charm to the subject of metaphysics altogether unprecedented in the annals of philosophy. We cannot undertake, in a cursory outline like this, to convey a perfect idea of the beauty and eloquence of his style; for that we must refer to the work itself, which will much more than reward perusal. For we repeat, that even those who do not adopt the system of M. Cousin, or who are not prepared to admit with him that intellectual philosophy is the culminating point, *le dernier mot*, of humanity, cannot fail to admire the profundity of his views, the extent of his learning, his fearless but catholic spirit, his reverence for religion, and just respect for humanity. From a comprehensive analysis of the human mind he has elaborated the thread which is to conduct him through the labyrinth of systems and schools: while his soaring genius, hovering above all the peculiarities of eras or sects, comprises in its splendid generalization not the actual merely, but the possible, and embraces in one vast idea, God, man, and the universe.

Although the philosophy of mind is so unsettled, yet it is generally admitted that the mission of the philosopher is to describe and arrange what in some form or other is already known, and to elicit the truth from amidst the various disguises and fallacies

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by which it is enveloped. This principle is adopted by Cousin as the essential character of his philosophy. He attaches himself to no school, he invokes not the genius of any one great mind, but the genius of philosophy alone. It is with him a fundamental maxim, that every system which has been believed must contain some truth, since the mind of man is so constituted, that it never assents to any proposition wholly destitute of truth. That a small portion of truth has given currency to monstrous errors is a fact, which, far from rendering us sceptical as to the reality of truth, only tends the more to illustrate its value.*

M. Cousin's plan embraces the whole history of philosophy in every age and nation, its leading minds and various systems. No one system, he says, can be fully comprehended without an insight into all the consequences which may be fairly charged upon it, a knowledge of the causes which influenced its development, and a retrospect of its relation to the period to which it belongs. In conformity with this eclectic principle, the study of every system is the true basis on which every inquirer into intellectual science should proceed. He assumes that all the problems which the human mind can propose to itself have been successively advanced, and that the various modes by which they have been solved, or attempted to be solved, have given birth to numerous philosophical theories, that may all be referred to two schools, the physiological and the ideal. To the first belong those systems which derive all our knowledge from the senses, to the second those which derive it from the intellect. To these he afterwards added two others, the sceptical and the mystical; they are the extremes to which the two original systems tend, and at which they often arrive.

* "What I propose to inculcate, is not such or such special philosophy, but philosophy itself; not attachment to such or such system, however great it may be, nor admiration of any particular man, whatever may have been his genius, but the philosophical spirit, superior to all systems and philosophies; that is to say, unbounded love of truth wheresoever it is to be met, the comprehension of all systems which profess to contain it wholly and entirely, and which at least possess it partially, and respect for all the men who have sought it, or who still seek it, with ability and sincerity. The genuine inspiration of the historian of philosophy is not hatred but love; and the province of criticism is not only to point out the real and numerous extravagances existing in philosophical systems, but also to extract and disentangle from out these errors the truths which may and must be therein involved, and thereby to reveal human reason to itself, to justify the philosophy of the past, to embolden and illumine that of the future."—*Introduction to the History of Philosophy.*

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According to M. Cousin, each system which has prevailed owes its temporary success to the truth contained in it; but being founded on a partial view of the mental phenomena—although offered as complete—it fails to explain the whole, and thus generates doubt, and at last scepticism. But the mind cannot remain in a state of unbelief. Distrusting its reasoning powers, whose insufficiency it has experienced, it takes refuge in faith, and is carried to the extreme of mysticism. As each of these schools has been from time to time adopted, they must all have contained some truth; but truth is one, and there have been four schools; none of them contained the whole truth, but each, with the element of truth which secured its adoption, involved some element of error. These four divisions comprise the whole field of intellectual philosophy, and furnish the groundwork of the arrangement followed by our author in treating its history. The lectures delivered in the year 1829, commence with a preliminary sketch of ancient philosophy, and then proceed to the history of the sensual school of the eighteenth century. Those of the preceding year had been devoted to an analysis of the understanding, with a view to ascertain the laws which regulate its operations.

The history of philosophy is the history of human reason, and therefore supplies the materials and the tests of intellectual science. The individual examination of mind affords, however, the most certain knowledge; there we have actual experience of the phenomena that arouse attention. But the internal vision is liable to be disturbed and obscured by the false media through which we look, and even by the nearness and familiarity of the objects; both methods of inquiry are therefore pursued by M. Cousin, and he believes that the results of his internal investigation are in every respect confirmed by the testimony of history.

At the commencement of his course, he undertakes to prove that philosophy is an essential element in our nature; that its history is not a mere record of arbitrary conceits and chimeras; that it results necessarily from the irrepressible yearnings of the mind; being not the reveries of a few men of genius, propagated and maintained by their authority, but the legitimate offspring of the human constitution. The various influences under which men are found to act, are by him referred to five different heads—utility or industry, justice, art, religion, and philosophy. So soon as man was planted on the earth, it is clear that, without a knowledge and application of the laws of the natural world, his frail existence could not be secured a moment. It

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was his province to observe the properties of the objects around him, and mould them to his use. The earth was originally only the groundwork or material for the labors of man; its present value and perfection are the consequence of his industry, involving little less than the creation of a new world. Such are the effects of science and industry. Besides such actions as have the character of being useful or hurtful, we observe others which are just or unjust. Justice is the basis of civil or political society. As interpreted, it does not affect the interests of human nature, but is confined to outward actions; and it is invoked equally to protect and to regulate liberty. Individually considered, men are not equal—one excels another in talents and strength; but civil society, when it places all on the same footing before the law, establishes so far a perfect equality. "The idea of the just is one of the glories of human nature: man perceives it at first, but he perceives it only as a light glimmering in the deep night of primitive passions; he sees it perpetually violated, and every moment obliterated, by the necessary disorder resulting from conflicting passions and interests."

The sentiment of the beautiful is naturally evoked by appropriate objects. The mind perceives and welcomes the beauty diffused over everything around us, disengages it from the imperfection with which it is commingled, and forms to itself an ideal beauty, surpassing any in the external world. "The beauty of art is superior to natural beauty, by all the superiority of man over nature."

But this world, says M. Cousin, so metamorphosed and remodelled by man, is not sufficient for him. His thoughts spring far beyond it: powerful as he is, he yet conceives a higher power—he discerns a Deity. Worship is the development, the realization of the sentiment of religion, and first gratifies its cravings by presenting the idea under some symbol or external form. But the mind cannot rest satisfied with symbols; it seeks, by analysis and examination, to approach and comprehend the Deity hid behind them. Thus reflection succeeds to faith: "the first moment in which man reflects, gives birth to philosophy."

Philosophy comprehends the highest class of our intellectual operations. It presents, in the form of general propositions, the results, proceeding from the operation of the several distinct principles of utility, justice, beauty, and religion. "Philosophy does not cut to art its divine wings, but follows in its flight, and measures its powers and object."

These views, if correct, should be confirmed by history, for

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human nature is equally exemplified in the whole species, which exhibits the same elements as the individual, on a larger scale; and, accordingly, M. Cousin finds, after taking a survey of the whole course of history, that the philosophic element is more or less developed in every period.

In the East, philosophy appeared with the traits of infancy, and enveloped in religion; passing thence into Greece, it gradually threw off the weight of authority, and came forth from the hands of Socrates in its proper shape, as the spirit of inquiry, examination, and reflection. In the middle ages, it was again brought under subjection. The characteristic of the scholastic philosophy was to keep within a circle, not marked out by itself, but imposed by ecclesiastical authority. That of the present age is the free use of reason, and the emancipation is now complete. The philosophic spirit, once introduced into the world, cannot be checked; the proportion of philosophers, namely, of those who reflect, increases with every age; and although philosophy is still in its infancy, we may look forward with confidence to its maturity. This may mortify presumption, but it flatters hope.

Having shown that the philosophic element is a part, and the highest part, of human nature, the author thence infers, that it will so appear in history, which is the reflection of human nature; for the history of philosophy is the history of the understanding, considered under all the circumstances in which it can be called to act. This history is both special and general; special, because it treats of only one part of our nature, the intellectual; and general, inasmuch as this part includes a variety of distinct faculties, or forms, under which it operates.

As the history of philosophy is a special examination of our intellectual part, M. Cousin regards it as a necessary preliminary to ascertain the elements whereof this is composed. The understanding, like the other faculties, is developed before it is observed and examined. When it began to be reflected on, then philosophy began. It has been the object of all those philosophers who have left any trace in history, to give an account of the understanding, its nature, laws, and rights; but a rigorous and scientific analysis of it has been only twice attempted—first by Aristotle, and next by Kant. M. Cousin does not admit that either of these philosophers has arrived at a perfect analysis—that they have discovered all the elements of the intellect, or all their mutual relations. "When we have obtained these elements, when we have reduced them, when we have ascertained

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all their relations—then only shall we be in possession of the foundations of reason, and of its history."

M. Cousin, therefore, analyzes the mind anew. He begins by assuming what he thinks no one will deny, that human reason, whether applied to internal or external things, conceives under two ideas, which are the ultimate elements of thought—unity and multiplicity. These two ideas have been recognized in all systems, and expressed by several terms, such as the necessary and the contingent, the absolute and the relative, the infinite and the finite, substance and phenomenon. A just analysis, in M. Cousin's opinion, identifies all the first and also all the second of these terms, and reduces them to two, as vast as reason, or even as the possible—namely, unity, and multiplicity, or plurality. These arise in the mind simultaneously; or, if multiplicity succeeds unity, the succession is scarcely perceptible. Unity cannot act without generating plurality, namely, variety; and variety cannot be produced except by unity. The two are connected by the relation of cause, which relation is as necessary as the elements themselves; from their existence results all reality and life. These two terms, unity and plurality, express the ultimate points of M. Cousin's analysis, and, together with the relation of cause, by which they are necessarily united, constitute, to use his own words, a triplicity which resolves itself into unity. This unity is intelligence or mind. It is, says he, the vice of both ancient and modern systems, that they separate unity from plurality, the infinite from the finite, so that the passage from the one to the other is impossible. But the absolute and the infinite must result in the relative and finite, because the first is a cause, and this relation is of its essence.

The union of the infinite with the finite, by the relation of cause, is the distinguishing feature of M. Cousin's theory—the bridge by which he crosses the hitherto impassable gulf.

Arrived at this sublime point, he adds, we have lost sight of earth; we can discern nothing but these three abstractions—unity, multiplicity, and cause—which are the integral elements of human reason, and also of the Divine intelligence. He proceeds to examine more at large the nature of these abstractions. Human reason is impersonal; that is, independent of our will. We can act, or refrain from acting, but we cannot change a mathematical conception, we cannot make equality difference, or virtue vice; therefore, personality consists in the will. Reason is absolute, universal, divine. Human reason is imperfect, because it is enveloped in a finite nature; but still it is a frag-

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ment of the pure incorruptible intellect—the absolute reason, whose essence is always the same.

Ideas are not the product of intelligence, but intelligence itself: we cannot call them ours; they are not so much conceptions of human reason, as of that absolute reason of which ours is a part. They are only lent, as it were, to human reason, and their existence there is wholly intellectual. The condition of intelligence is not merely that it exist in the mind, but that it be developed; that is, we must be conscious of it, for intelligence without consciousness is merely the abstract possibility of intelligence. Now, consciousness implies difference; thus unity, which is intelligence, necessarily results in variety; and that this is through the relation of cause, M. Cousin undertakes to show by a further examination.

In considering ourselves, we necessarily encounter something not ourselves, by which we are limited and controlled: this gives us the idea of the finite, that is, the limited; but the finite cannot arise in the mind without the idea of the infinite. The infinite is known only by its acts; hence we get the idea of cause. It is not in the power of man to destroy these three ideas, which are the foundation of all his consciousness. They are not an arbitrary production of human reason; they constitute that reason; and what is true of that, is true also of absolute reason, a part of which it is. This absolute reason being of necessity a cause, must of necessity create; thus we are conducted from God to the universe, by creation.

The common idea of creation is, that something is made out of nothing. But the philosophers tell us that nothing can come of nothing; whence it follows, that creation is impossible; and since the world does actually exist, as it could not be created, it must be self-existent. Thus we have two self-existent principles.

But if we examine the idea of nothing, we shall find it to be a mere hypothesis without proof. To create, is a thing not difficult to conceive, for we create every time we will—we produce an effect which we ascribe to none other than ourselves. The act begins by virtue of the principle of causation, which exists in us, and is essential to our mind. To cause, then, according to M. Cousin, is not to create out of nothing, but to exercise any inherent power. God creates from the power inherent in his nature; as he is absolute, to create in him is necessary; and the difference between the creative power in man and God is, the general difference of an absolute and relative cause. In man, the creative power cannot pass the limit of his own mind, and is besides con-

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trolled by accidents without and within. Still it is creative power, and so far a type of divine creation.

The principle of causation is not exhausted by its effects, but retains all its potency and nature. The creation of the universe, though necessary, and a manifestation of God, does not exhaust the Deity, as when *we* will, it does not exhaust the power of willing.

The harmony of the universe proves the unity of God; but harmony is not unity, for it supposes variety. The whole world reflects God, that is, the elements of his divine essence, unity and variety: these pass into the world, and return thence to the consciousness of man; that is, are perceived and comprehended by him.

Thus, setting out from human nature, we ascend to God. Since mind is of one essence, it must in man be a portion of the Divinity. From God, who is of necessity a cause, we proceed to the world he has created. From creation we are brought back to humanity, as that which comprehends it and is the compendium of all nature. In each we find the three ideas, unity, multiplicity, and cause, which are the foundation of all things. The result at which the philosopher arrives, on completing the circle of existence, human and divine, is this grand truth, that history, which is the image of humanity, may be resolved into the same elements; whence it follows that there can be but three grand epochs in history, each of which is characterized by the predominance of one of these elements over the other, and by the degree in which one modifies the other.

M. Cousin further considers the development of reason as twofold—spontaneous and reflective. The nature of universal truths, or rather of that power which recognizes them, is a point which has puzzled the metaphysical world not less than the passage from the infinite to the finite. That they are recognized by the human mind is a fact which no one denies; but the philosophers wish to account for it, and in this they have not yet succeeded to their own satisfaction. Kant calls these elements of reason subjective laws, that is, laws of the human mind; but if they are subjective, or personal, we cannot, says M. Cousin, transport them out of ourselves: and, according to this theory, although the external world may be to us an invincible belief, it cannot be a separate existence; and the same may be said of God. M. Cousin's explanation of this problem lies in the distinction of reason, as spontaneous and reflective. Spontaneity, according to him, is the power which reason has to seize truth at a grasp—to com-

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prehend and admit it without explanation. These truths are not personal—they do not belong to this or that mind, but they are universal—of the essence of all mind. This involuntary perception of truth is, he says, accompanied with enthusiasm, and man ascribes it to God; it is, in fact, a real revelation. It has been called inspiration, and is in all languages distinguished from reflection. This spontaneous reason, by the aid of analysis, that is, by a process of reflection, engenders those elements of human reason which philosophers call categories. *Reflection* does not *give*, it only *explains* these, for these laws are universal, and reflection is personal. It must be acknowledged that reason operates in both these ways; and the only objection to the explanation of M. Cousin is, that almost in the same breath in which he describes reason as twofold, that is, spontaneous and reflective, or liable to err, he affirms that it is impersonal, absolute, and incapable of error. Nothing, he says, can be more impersonal than reason, and these universal truths are a part of or constitute it. But if reason be defined to mean the power of apprehending universal truth, it cannot be used to express the whole development of mind.

M. Cousin's explanation does not differ essentially from that of Fichte, who also ascribes to the human mind a twofold nature, the absolute and the phenomenal. The root of the difficulty appears to us to lie in the identification of reason with universal truth. The perception of this truth does not necessarily impose universality on the percipient, neither does the fact that the percipient is finite limit these truths to his own finite nature. It is an undoubted power of the human mind to attain, more or less perfectly, to knowledge of something beyond itself. Though not secured from error, it can yet arrive at the conception of truth, and, with all its frailty, recognize and adore perfection; and thus, while bearing the marks of a created, and consequently a finite nature, it proves the Creator divine. Although we do not object to the terms spontaneity and reflection, as designating two operations of human reason so different as the perception of absolute and that of relative truth; yet this explanation does not solve the metaphysical problem, in our opinion a mere chimera, of the transportation of the laws of the human mind into the universe, or show satisfactorily how the absolute and the impersonal can be, at the same time, the relative and personal, though we can readily admit, because experience proves it, that the human mind is so constituted as to take in both these classes of ideas.

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But to return to M. Cousin. The human mind, he says, contains in a latent state those divine rays, which reflection afterwards educes. These are the truths of spontaneity, and are the same to all. The vast variety and differences of mankind, which are not to be denied but explained, arise from *reflection*. Spontaneity is uniform, but reflection is an element of difference. The condition of reflection is time, that is, succession. As reflection can only consider the elements of thought successively, it may take one to be the whole. This is the source of all error. But error cannot be complete; reflection, in its most extravagant wanderings, may always be retrieved, for it must have hold of some truth. Error does not arise from false, but from incomplete ideas; and every conception, according to this system, is true, excepting so far as it is taken for the whole truth. "We are always in the true, and yet almost always in the false, when we reflect, because we are almost invariably in the incomplete, and the incomplete again necessarily arises from variety and from error."

If we apply the test of history to this principle, we shall find that it discloses the same unity and difference on a larger scale. The elements of human nature are developed successively; error is partial and fugitive, while truth is universal and enduring.

With regard to the order of their development, M. Cousin says, that in the human mind the elements appear at first confusedly, till reflection examines and separates them. The finite is always in the mind, for our first perception of it is of ourselves; but this idea, too weak at its commencement to absorb the others, is absorbed by the infinite, which, being developed, generally becomes predominant. The obscurity which accompanies it adds to its power. Man loses himself in the contemplation of this infinite, which he knows he has not made. "Man, with his frailty, being unable to attribute to himself these awful and majestic characteristics, is humbled by this crushing intuition; humanity is eclipsed in its own eyes, before the Being who is alone in possession of unity, infinity, omnipotence, eternity, and absolute existence."

Man cannot begin by ascertaining that reason in him is but a part of this divine essence; but at length he feels his importance —the ravishing sentiment of power eclipses every other. Then comes the epoch of personality, of the finite. This will be an age of movement, of physical science, enterprise, liberty. When these two epochs have had their full course in every sphere, the third—the perception of their relation—arrives. From this will

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result a more enlarged development—a more rational state of things.

This necessary order of succession conceals, in M. Cousin's opinion, an order more profound—the order of generation; for each epoch is modified by, and is the result of, the preceding. Thus, the eternal elements of all things are founded in history, which, according to this philosophy, is not merely a compendium of human nature, but of the universe.*

Regarded thus as a whole, the result of the necessary operation of wise and beneficent laws, ordained by an infinitely perfect Being, history is not only beautiful and philosophical, but highly moral. We can conceive a Deity as being in his nature absolute, and without any relation to this world; but such is not the God of humanity—such is not the God revealed to us in the benevolence, the harmony, the justice of the universe. For, if there be a Providence apparent throughout all history, it must be by his regular laws. If nothing can exist except on the condition of its relation to God, everything has its reason, and nothing is insignificant. The world of ideas is hid in the world of facts, and it is the mission of the philosopher to disengage and distinguish these ideas, to connect each fact, even the most particular, with some general law. The grand principle on which he must proceed, according to M. Cousin, is, that every place represents necessarily an idea—of consequence, one of the three ideas into which all others may be resolved. This is the first rule of history, and, applied to the grand manifestations of each period, admits of three divisions—the place, the people, and individuals, or great men.

Climate and locality must be allowed to have an influence in determining the character of a people, unless we can believe that he who is consumed by the heat of the torrid zone, is liable

* "Nay! history not only reflects the whole movement of humanity, but as humanity is the compendium of the universe, which is a manifestation of the Deity, it follows in ultimate deduction, that history is in fact the expression of divine action. The admirable order which prevails in it, is a type of the eternal order; the imperative nature of its laws rests in final principle on God himself—God considered in his relations with the world, and particularly with humanity, which is the grand climax of creation.

If history be the government of God rendered manifest, all is appropriate in history; and if all be appropriate, all is good; for everything tends to the object marked out by a beneficent Power.

History thus viewed in this universal harmony is signally grand; it is a glorious poem, the drama or epopée of the human race."—*Introduction to the History of Philosophy.*

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to the same sensations as he who inhabits the frozen deserts of Siberia. A vast continent, surrounded by the impassible ocean, divided by immense mountains, like Asia, is the place where we must look for the prevalence of the infinite; and here, in the commencement of history, we find the first epoch. The finite is an age of personality; it is developed in a land abounding in rivers, seas, and facilities for intercommunication. The third requires a large continent in the temperate zone, possessing navigable waters and varied productions. This epoch is recent, and has scarcely passed its barbarous period.

Although each epoch is marked by the prevalence of one idea, yet this does not exist alone, otherwise it would be a mere abstraction; other elements appear in a greater or less degree: hence the necessity of considering apart the several populations comprehended in any one epoch, each of which exhibits some modification of the leading idea. Every nation has its own place and connections in the grand system of humanity—owes its character to the ages that preceded it, and bequeaths one to those which come after. The prevailing idea must pass through each of the spheres—industry, law, art, religion, and philosophy—before it has completed its work. Philosophy is the most important, and that which explains all the rest. The history of philosophy, says M. Cousin, affords the light by which alone we can know and comprehend all other histories; while its generalization contains not merely the most important truths, but all that can strictly be called truth. "It is abstract truth which gives a basis to, and legitimatizes truth found in the concrete. All knowledge, as all truth, lies in abstraction, that is to say, in reflection, that is to say, in philosophy."

Thus, we have only to consider the philosophy of each people, in any given epoch, and subject it to its highest generalization, to obtain the idea of that epoch.

This particular idea is always taken by each people for the whole. One truth appears after another, till at length all the elements of thought arrive at their complete development. Thus, there is an incessant struggle of opinions; for when one idea or people has performed its part in the great drama of humanity, it must yield to the next, and this cannot take place without a struggle. War, therefore, is, in the opinion of M. Cousin, inevitable; but is not to be regarded as an evil, since it conduces to that succession of ideas which is the completion of human nature. Each people will conquer, will endure for a time, and, having fulfilled its destiny, pass away, and give place to the

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next; but humanity is superior to all epochs, outlives all, is perfected by all. Although each people, collectively considered, represents, as M. Cousin expresses it, an idea, that is, has a prevailing character, yet nations are made up of individuals, and some of these express more, others less, the general spirit of their age. Those who represent it most completely, are its great men. They add to the general character their own individuality, which gives it life and reality. As they are the most perfect expression of the idea of their age, history treats only of them, and through them represents the whole epoch. They are not only the expression, but the result of their age; formed by it, as well as identified with it; and, being the expression of humanity, which is the compendium of the universe, to know them is to know everything.

Great men are the final result of the order, or perpetual movement of things, as M. Cousin declares in a beautiful passage:—"Thus nature represents God; and as nature, with all its laws, is summed up in humanity, and humanity, with all its epochs, is summed up in great men, it results, with a rigor altogether incontestible, that the order of things, or rather the perpetual movements of things, is in all its eras and grades but the production of great men."

When formed, the great man is the instrument of a power not his own—the idea of his time. When the moment for its appearance arrives, he comes, and remains only so long as he is needed. M. Cousin admits that this savors of fatalism; but, he says, great men have ever been fatalists, have ever regarded themselves as the instruments of destiny—as irresistible; and hence their success. The result of success is power; and men, when they have obtained power, often abuse it; but they would not hold it a moment were it not for sympathy with their age; hence the devotion paid to the great man. Mankind identify him with themselves, and have an irresistible conviction that *he* is the people—the epoch. The glory which crowns him is his due, for glory is the appropriate reward of great results. "Glory is the echo of sympathy and gratitude; it is the debt of humanity towards genius; it is the reward of services which it pays with its most precious gift—its esteem."

As the success of great men commands our admiration, so does their fall excite our compassion: but we must remember that humanity always prevails; and although we give a sigh to the noble vanquished, we would not change their destiny, for that would be to retard the progress of humanity. It is the same

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with the philosopher and his systems. In the combats of philosophy, we find matter not of regret but of encouragement; they indicate that humanity is preparing to take a new step, and confirm our faith in the excellence of human reason, which, in the conflicts of its great men, profits by their errors as well as their victories—"which advances only over ruins, but which still constantly advances."

As thought and action are the two most important manifestations of mind, the greatest men are philosophers and warriors; and as philosophy is the last and best form of humanity, and that which comprehends all the rest, its history is the completion of all history; the highest, the most comprehensive theme that can challenge and reward the labors of genius.

The idea of universal history may be said to be recent; and even those histories which are called so, are restricted to a single department of human nature, as religion, law, or philosophy. The philosophical histories which have appeared in Germany, though excellent as far as they go, represent only particular schools. Universal history, in M. Cousin's sense of it, has never been accomplished. It should aim at nothing less than to seize the harmony of all things—of nature, time, and humanity. Such is the magnificent plan which this philosopher has conceived, and which he, if any one, has ably filled up. Nothing can be foreign to his immense design; every department of physical or mental existence will supply its beam of truth to the torch which shall irradiate the path of history, and consummate the science of mind. The eclectic principle is the polar star which guides him in the vast career on which he has entered. He will examine every system, and refer it to its true place; accept every truth, and harmonize every contrariety. The two great schools, the sensual and the ideal, include every idea the mind can conceive, and they have both been completely exhausted. Nothing can go beyond the sensualism of the school of Locke, the idealism of Kant and Fichte. The only remaining course, as Cousin affirms, unless the mind is destined to stop short in the nineteenth century, is to reconcile and amalgamate the two, or rather the truth of each. Thus, the eclectic philosophy is not only the best, the true, but the only possible philosophy.

Humanity is a grand topic. It is not an immoveable picture, but a continued action of life and reality, whose periods and eras are all connected by the wisest relations, evolving the most beneficent effects. Nor is this all; for this immense develop-

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ment of created mind is but a single manifestation of that infinite and eternal Mind, in whose essence all others are contained.

It must be acknowledged that the vastness, the optimism, and the unity of this plan—whatever may be thought of its practicability—invest the subject with a sublimity and grandeur it has never before possessed, and raise the mind which contemplates it, in some measure, to the elevation of his in which it was first conceived.

A point much insisted on by M. Cousin is the relation of cause, by which the difficulty of passing from the infinite to the finite is removed. There is no possible form of existence which does not come under one or the other of these terms, which is not either infinite or finite; the difference between them is radical. How can that which is finite and varied come from that which is infinite and one? How can unity generate variety, unless it first contain this variety in its essence; that is, unless it be not unity? But, says M. Cousin, causation is of the essence of the absolute —of necessity it creates. Creation involves two things, the creating cause, and that which is created. This relation which unity has to variety, that is, the necessity of producing it, according to our philosopher, connects the dissimilar elements of the infinite and the finite, in a legitimate and intelligible manner. We lack penetration sufficient to perceive the peculiar effect attributed to this explanation—that of absolving unity from the supposed absurdity or impossibility of generating variety. Unity and plurality are abstractions of the mind, ideas essentially distinct and incompatible. To affirm that one of these abstractions is the other, that is, that unity is, or can become variety, is a contradiction. But when we affirm that the Deity has created the universe, or, to speak metaphysically, that the infinite can produce the finite, we are not guilty of this absurdity; we advance an altogether different proposition; that is, that a being, possessing the attribute of infinity, can create finite natures. This proposition, though it demands proof, involves no contradiction; but if it did, M. Cousin's explanation does not assist us; for that either assumes the very point in question, and affirms that unity does, and must, generate variety, or else defines unity to be not one but two ideas—unity and causation. The infinite is undoubtedly connected with the finite by the relation of cause; but, in admitting this, we must give up unity as synonymous with the infinite, that is, in the abstract sense of the term.

M. Cousin's reduction of all philosophical systems to two, is

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not destitute of grounds; but he carries the spirit of system too far—a spirit of which he himself says, "nothing is so inexorable" —when he insists on ranging every philosopher in one or the other of these schools. The soundest minds have been those which have avoided a system, and cannot be said to belong exclusively to either school. M. Cousin admits that, although the sensual system of the continent was founded on Locke's philosophy, Locke himself did not go to that extreme; and he seems to infer that all the principles derived by the sensual philosophers from Locke were truths, and therefore gave currency to the errors with which they were incorporated.

The arrangement of all history into three epochs likewise savors too much of system. All the actual and possible forms of existence are reduced to three elementary ideas. Can anything more be conceded than that they may all be distributed into three classes? To class objects according to their most general character is not the same thing as to resolve them into their ultimate elements; and it may be objected that, in this instance, the two things are confounded. But admitting that these three abstractions, the infinite, the finite, and their relation of cause, are the ultimate elements of thought, that there is no idea which is not compounded of these, and that the species exhibits only what belongs to the individual; still it is not without some aid from fancy, that the order established by M. Cousin is made to prevail throughout all past and future history.

There is no idea more just in itself, and more happily brought out by this able philosopher, than the eclectic principle—that there is a portion of truth in every system, which gives it currency, while it is the taking this portion for the whole which is the source of error. The method he proposes of gathering up these scattered truths, is the true philosophical method—the only one which will in the end, although by slow degrees, establish intellectual philosophy on immutable principles, or exorcise it out of that wizard circle of theory and system in which it has been for ages spell-bound.

We have now given the outlines, the principles of M. Cousin's doctrine, chiefly extracted from the *Introduction à l'Historie de la Philosophie.* The doctrine may be seen fully developed and illustrated in the other works of the philosopher which followed this exposition of his ideas. But when will the eclectic perfection to which we have just alluded be attained? We are well aware that when we say, we regard the perfection of this system as the ultimatum of intellectual philosophy, our conviction will

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be considered by many as a gross delusion. But are mankind destined to receive other metaphysical systems?—or will eclecticism be completed in this age? We refrain from arguing these questions; we leave each to form his own conclusions, and will merely add, that under all circumstances—although M. Cousin has not exercised with sufficient caution that power of generalization which distinguishes the philosophic from the vulgar mind—although, despite his profundity and comprehensiveness, he is sometimes betrayed into a spirit of system and into the subtleties of abstraction—the science is deeply indebted to him for the new light he has shed upon it, and for the unwonted attraction with which he has contrived to invest a subject so generally neglected from its apparent dryness and difficulty.

M. Cousin has been accused of various infidel tendencies; but of his respect for that religion, whose mild influence upon society makes it a fitting handmaid to the lights of the present age, we cannot adduce more satisfactory testimony than by referring to almost every page of his lectures, and by quoting his final declaration on the subject. "I have already given my profession of faith upon this last point: I repeat it with pleasure—in my opinion, all truths are contained in Christianity; but those eternal truths may and ought to be at this day approached, unfolded, and illustrated by philosophy. There is but one truth at bottom; but truth has two forms, that of mystery and of scientific exposition. I revere the one; I am here the organ, the interpreter of the other."

After the master, one word on the scholars. The ablest disciples of M. Cousin are MM. Jouffroy and Damiron. M. Jouffroy, modestly content to follow, while no one is more entitled to lead, has, by his excellent versions of Reid and Dugald Stewart, powerfully co-operated in the establishment in France of a philosophy equally opposed to the exclusive sensualism of Condillac and the exclusive idealism of the German school. The admirable preface or introduction he has prefixed to Dugald Stewart's *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, presents the most luminous analysis or commentary that has perhaps ever appeared of that illustrious Scottish philosopher. Profound and clear, free from that fond partiality generally entertained for the object of our studies, and actuated by the pure love of philosophic truth, whilst he displays in transparent colors all the treasures of the great Scottish philosophers, he has given a commendable example of the spirit which should animate all philosophical inquiry. It might have been apprehended that, when comparing the Scottish school with

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other systems which widely differ, at least in appearance, he would not estimate the latter at their true value. But it is far otherwise: his views are superior to all systems; he draws them from humanity itself, studied in all its forms and shapes; and when he treats other philosophies, he exhibits an undeviating impartiality, and ever proves himself to be truly eclectic. In 1834, M. Jouffroy published his *Mélanges*, being a collection of various philosophical articles that had appeared in a celebrated paper called the *Globe*, which excited great admiration. The most remarkable in the volume is a splendid discourse on the problem of human destiny, which forms altogether one of the most affecting and perfect models of philosophic eloquence in any language.

M. Damiron, professor of philosophy at the Ecole Normale and at the Sorbonne, where he occupies the chair of M. Royer-Collard, has published a *Cours de Philosophie*, distinguished for perspicuity and clearness of deduction, which has been greatly instrumental in diffusing a sound knowledge of the eclectic school. His essay on the *Philosophie en France au 19e Siècle* enjoys even a higher reputation, and it is indeed a very remarkable work of analysis, characterized by genuine eclectic toleration, and by a style at once elegant and attractive.

Among the numerous alumni of the university who are in different parts of France the organs of the eclectic philosophy, the most distinguished are—M. Bouillet, known principally by his valuable annotations on Bacon; M. de Cardaillac, author of *Etudes Elementaires de Philosophie;* M. Mazure, professor at Poitiers, author of a *Cours de Philosophie*, and of some very able dissertations on Descartes; M. Ozaneaux, of Toulouse, who has also published a *Cours de Philosophie;* M. Hippeau, who, in a history of philosophy, has given an excellent summary of M. Cousin's great works; and MM. Tissot of Dijon, Garnier of Versailles, Poret, Caro, Paffe, Caunes, Gerusez, etc.

Having now completed our sketch of the philosophy of M. Cousin, as of the doctrine most prevalent at the present time in French mind and education, it is incumbent on us, before relinquishing the subject, to say something of the hostility it has met with. This is fitting, not only as a satisfaction due to the judicious and impartial inquirer, but as an obligation imposed by the equity of those very eclectic principles we profess.

The eclectic school has encountered many opponents. It has been often and ably assailed by the periodical press; principally, by the *Edinburgh Review* (October 1829); by the *Catholique* of

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M. d'Eckstein; by a former monthly review, *L'Europe Littéraire*, and others. It would be endless, and not to our purpose, to analyze all those critiques, many of which are forgotten, like most things that emanate from the periodical press. But the most able and complete attack, the most regular assault that eclecticism has ever sustained, was made at the close of 1839, in a work entitled *Réfutation de l'Eclectisme*, written by one of the most profound thinkers of the age, M. Pierre Leroux.

With regard to M. Pierre Leroux, he and M. Reynaud both formerly belonged to the St. Simonian sect, and, at the dissolution of that society, they united their indefatigable labors in preparing an exposition of their doctrines and principles, which they presented to the public in their *Encyclopédie Nouvelle*. The early volumes of this vast undertaking inspired a legitimate admiration by the candor and profundity of the articles; but when, at a later period, the *Encyclopedie Nouvelle* began to treat religious questions, it estranged most of those who were previously disposed in its favor, by forsaking the old and sacred traditions of mankind, and reverting to the exploded anti-religious theories of the preceding age. Whatever may be the learning its authors have displayed in other branches, they could not overcome the repugnance to which their obsolete religious opinions gave rise.

I have said that M. Pierre Leroux is one of the most profound thinkers of the age; he is, at the same time, a man of modest pretensions, a practical philosopher, who prefers a noble poverty and freedom of pursuits to all those highly remunerated dignities and employments which ensure the venality of so many men of letters. He is a sage in the sacred acceptation of the ancients, who has long remained obscure, despite his prodigious learning; vigorous and imaginative in the qualities of his mind, they are all enhanced by purity of conscience, and an ardent zeal in the research of truth and wisdom. His fame, however, is now extending widely, not only in France but in Germany also, where he is called the restorer of philosophy. M. Leroux's recent work, *De l'Humanité, de son Principe, et de son Avenir*, gives the first indication of a new intellectual philosophy, the produce and result of a life's contemplation. In this work he intimates his fundamental tenets: he believes, for instance, that all systems of religion and philosophy which have hitherto appeared in this world possess a common basis of essential truths, which differ in their form owing to the diversity of ages and localities; he proclaims the error of all the metaphysical schools,

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whose definition of man is always narrowly confined; and he affirms that man, in his various manifestations, is, to use his own words, ever and at the same time, *sensation—sentiment—consciousness.* He proposes a social association, founded upon charity, but on a charity superior to that of Christianity, which he finds imperfect, contradictory, and incapable of organization. He denies any division between heaven and earth, and explains the identity of God with man; in his eyes futurity does not differ from the present life; the universal abstract being, called Humanity, forms but one essence with the Deity, and future life is but the continuation of humanity, dependent on its perfection. He believes in a continual and collective life of the human species, and also that memory is replaced by the spontaneity (*innéité*) of inclinations in new conditions of existence. The most startling doctrine in this new philosophy of M. Leroux, however, is contained in an admirably ingenious and eloquent dissertation, written to prove that the idea of the ancients on future life was the true one, namely, that man is constantly reproduced in humanity; and, to support and illustrate this idea, that the ethereal spirit, the soul, which animates us, is limited to the globe and passes from one to the other, and that we must therefore be at the same time our ancestors and our posterity. M. Leroux adduces Plato, Moses, Jesus Christ, Virgil and all the religions of the east, as corroborative testimony. There are, however, some paramount questions, such as the liberty of man and the morality of his actions, which he scarcely touches upon; but they no doubt are destined to belong to the following part of this philosophy, which he promises to give under the title of *De Dieu.* We do not here pretend to pass judgment on the merits and opinions of M. Leroux, or to offer more than a faint outline of his dogmas. We shall merely venture to affirm, that whatever may be their nature, a glance at the work itself will convince all enlightened men that it is entitled to attention and respect, from the profound erudition, the eloquence, and the extraordinary talent it exhibits.

But let us return to the *Réfutation de l'Eclectisme.*

In this volume, M. Pierre Leroux points out numerous contradictions in the works of M. Cousin, and accounts for them by the successive influence of the different masters under whose standards he has advanced; namely, Laromiguière, Royer-Collard, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel; and these contradictions are natural, he maintains, in a mind which is not inspired by an innate cognizance and perception of the problems of philosophy,

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but only reproduces the different solutions of other thinkers, without combination. Now, this we think the most unfounded reproach that can be addressed to M. Cousin; for it is certain he has defined the exclusive schools of Germany and Scotland, as well as of sensualism and catholicism, with admirable skill, blended them with a profound sense of harmony and truth, and improved on them by copious innovations, the fruits of his own comprehensive science. We cannot follow M. Pierre Leroux throughout his *Refutation:* we refer the curious to its pages. His principal attack is levelled at the psychological theory adopted by M. Cousin, and carried still farther by M. Jouffroy. "Philosophy," says M. Cousin, (thus going far beyond Bacon), "is only distinguished from physics by the nature of the phenomena we observe." To this M. Leroux objects, averring that M. Cousin has never understood what was philosophy; that the human soul is an animated force, active, sensitive; that it cannot be regarded only as a common phenomenon, but must be viewed in all its phases. To observe the external world, he says, we have eyes, hands, and so forth; but how can we observe the soul? M. Cousin and M. Jouffroy answer, by consciousness: and with that consciousness, says M. Leroux, what will you scan?—the *moi*, the self?—but this self is nothing else than consciousness again; so that you mean that consciousness, by the means of consciousness, should study and know consciousness? No; this cannot be, according to M. Leroux; you cannot think without thinking of something; and when you think of something, the thought of that thing prevents the observation of the working of thought. When a man is angry, he does not think much of watching what passes within him, and when his fit of anger is over, he can no longer observe that phenomenon: reasoning, he adds, deprives man of sentiment, of inspiration, of life itself. Whatever may be the force of this objection, and of others, to the psychology of the eclectic school, M. Pierre Leroux has disgraced a work, adorned with many elevated and profound passages and the vindication of manly principles, by assailing M. Cousin not only as a philosopher but as a politician, nay, by attacking him in his individual capacity. How deplorable it is to behold the gravity of a work of special learning, in which there was ample scope for maintaining, even with warmth, honest convictions, without exceeding the limits of scientific criticism, thus degraded into a medium of odious virulence, of contemptible personalities and calumnies!

I have said nothing of that class of antagonists who are more

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than unjust and prejudiced—who, being incurably ignorant, gross, and callous, are devoid of every ennobling sentiment: who depreciate intellectual philosophy altogether. Let such men endeavor to reflect coolly and rationally; and, even admitting all their ridiculous objections as to the uselessness of intellectual philosophy to be well grounded, let them remember that the evils of a speculative or visionary mind are unfortunately not those which, in the present day, it behoves us to guard against. Are not the calculations of self-interest, and the division of labor, every where chaining down men's minds within miserable limits? Should we not *all* rejoice that there are spirits of loftier range, whose voices may arouse many to a sense of the grand features and broad principles of humanity, even should their flight be in the clouds?

But philosophy will ever remain one of the loftiest pursuits of the human mind—a noble, a divine science. The anarchy that has signalized its progress during this age, is the necessary consequence of manifold investigations: they will finally terminate in the universal establishment of one sole philosophical doctrine. If historical truth be pursued in so many various ways, if different versions be given to an age, to a fact, and to a science of facts, it cannot be expected that intellectual philosophy should emerge at once formed, perfect, and immutable.

Let us conclude this topic of inquiry with Madame de Staël's definition of philosophy; for it is one succinct and clear, full of beauty and scientific truth:—"Philosophy is the perfection of thought; it attests the dignity of man, who is competent to inquire into the eternal and the invisible, although all that is gross in his nature conspires to unfit him for such contemplations."

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CHAPTER THIRD.

POLITICAL TENDENCIES.

Political Spirit of France.—M. de Bonald's Political Works.—Constitutional Tendencies of France.—Manifestations of the Nation.—French Pamphleteers.—M. de Chateaubriand's Pamphlets—his Political Life and Influence.—M. Guizot's Political Articles—his Political Career during the Restoration—his Political Writings since 1830—his Work on Modern Democracy—his Character.—Political Works of MM. de Carne and Edouard Alletz.—M. Guizot's Article on the Alliance of Catholicism, Protestantism, and Philosophy, in France.—Retrospective Inquiry on the Restoration.—Paul-Louis Courier's Pamphlets—their Character and Merits—Compared to Junius and Swift—Murder of Paul-Louis Courier.—Beranger's Political Songs.—Political Pamphlets of M. de Cormenin.—M. de Lamennais—his *Paroles d'un Croyant*—Character of M. de Lamennais's last Pamphlet.—Political and Religious Works of L'Abbe Gerbet and M. de Genoude.—Socialism in France.—Saint-Simon—Sketch of his Life and Adventures—his Death—his Doctrine.—Momentary Prosperity of Saint-Simonism—its Propagation in France—Extravagances of the Sectaries of Saint-Simon—Decline and Fall of Saint-Simonism.—Charles Fourier—his Works—his Life—his Theories—Propagation of Fourierism.—General View of Socialist Utopias.

THE French nation has reached a great phasis of its history: after so many perilous commotions, it aims, in all directions, at a perfect organization. Warfare has disappeared from Europe, and nations, it is to be hoped, will no longer slaughter each other to gratify the caprice and ambition of individuals; if another great and sanguinary struggle occur, it will be a struggle between principles. The deplorable excesses of popular sovereignty at the end of the eighteenth century were, by the terror they inspired, naturally provocative, among enlightened men, of researches into the science of politics. The revolutionary legislation, from which all idea of the Deity was banished, and every page of which was stained with blood, underwent the ordeal of philosophical scrutiny, and, as is usually the case, theorists fell into the opposite extremes. In the very beginning of the nineteenth century, M. de Bonald presented France with a theory of despotism, in his work entitled *Legislation Primitive*, reproducing the old dogma, that the king is to his kingdom as the father to his family, holding the same sacred, indisputable prerogatives—a doctrine too full of fallacy and paradox, too palpably absurd and untenable in the eyes of all rational lovers of

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constitutional sovereignty, to need commentary or refutation: it was the corollary of the catholic school of philosophy. Napoleon appropriated to himself that absolute dominion; his victories gave him for a time in France that hallowed sway which M. de Bonald and his school attribute only to hereditary right; the country was dazzled by the achievements of his armies, and military glory made her forget her rights and dignity.

The constitutional tendencies of France can be traced in her annals for several centuries, and all the eloquent and enlightened men of our time foretell the progressive and final perfection of political liberty. The restoration of the Bourbons, from 1815 to 1830, was the last effort, the convulsive throe, of the old system and society. During the first year or two succeeding the revolution of 1830, the whole country was paralyzed by the terror which the effervescence of the victorious masses had inspired; every one felt that a populace howling in the streets would form a very unsatisfactory legislature; a return of former horrors was dreaded: but the nation had acquired an experience of forty years; no fatal consequences ensued; and the following years were employed in reducing the torrent to its own channel, giving it at the same time more ample space and freedom in its course, so as to render secure and placid its future progress.

The French people do not now, so much as in times past, give vent to impatient discontent by tumultuous assemblages; but we are not thence to infer that they are less alive to their interests and rights. We find a convincing proof of the keen interest taken in political transactions, in the unexampled eagerness with which all political, especially democratical, books are received. Works of this class have never at any time created so great and general a sensation—an impression invested with a character of gravity hitherto unknown; no publications under the restoration seized so effectually on the public mind, or were hailed with such an universal burst of sympathy, as have been the pamphlets of M. de Cormenin and the celebrated work of M. de Tocqueville. It is to be hoped that the strong desire of the French nation for legislative alterations will soon find some of those leaders who modify and moderate cravings after innovation, and who become the links and conciliators between the state and the people. "There is no nation in Europe," says M. de Tocqueville in his *Democracy in America*, "among whom the great social revolution I have described has made more progress than among ourselves; but it has always advanced at random. The heads of government have never thought of prepar-

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ing anything beforehand for its advantage; it has always taken place in spite of them, or without their knowledge. The most powerful, the most intelligent and moral classes of the nation, have never tried to superintend its march and regulate it."

We trust that these words, so replete with truth and wisdom, will not be applicable to the future political movements of France, and that they will command, as they so fully deserve, the earnest attention of all statesmen. What evidence can be more striking and irrefragable of a spirit of instability and dissatisfaction prevailing in France, of aspirations for political reform being deep and universal, than the extraordinary excitement occasioned under the restoration by the pamphlets of Paul-Louis Courier, and the songs of Béranger?—and in our own time by the political publications of M. de Cormenin and M. de Lamennais?

The pamphleteers compose a very influential class of men, and have produced some of the most remarkable works in the history of French literature. M. de Chateaubriand's political pamphlets form, we hold, his chief title to literary eminence, although expressing at different times opinions strangely diverse and anomalous, but each in its turn, as he maintained it, exercising a potential sway over the public mind. The fall of Napoleon was viewed by numbers in France with great satisfaction; the country was in a deplorable state of exhaustion; French blood had flowed for years in every part of Europe; the miseries and terrors of war, in short, had weighed so oppressively on all hearts, that the word "peace" was hailed with boundless enthusiasm. Nevertheless, the partisans of the dethroned emperor were still numerous, lion-hearted, and ready to rush to the field at the first signal. It was with the view of opposing this yet powerful and formidable body of Bonapartists that M. de Chateaubriand—carried away by that passionate excitement so rife in France at the eventful moment—published his celebrated pamphlet on *Bonaparte et les Bourbons*. It was an unmanly attack on the fallen giant, and naturally provoked in the imperial party a feeling of resentment and hatred that has not yet subsided, though so many years have elapsed since the offence was given—though so many elaborated eulogiums on the emperor have since issued from the author's pen.

This pamphlet of M. de Chateaubriand may be considered as the genuine, ardent, and unreserved expression of the passions that were then misleading the royalist party, and filling it with delirious exultation and dastardly feelings of revenge. It strik-

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ingly portrays the agitation produced by the terror still felt for the smitten Colossus, and the feverish dread entertained of his rising again, notwithstanding the overpowering blow he had received. There is a torrent of invective in its overwrought passages, stunning the ear like the shock of mail-clad warriors on a field of battle, and giving fearful proof of the deadly rage of parties, of the inveterate animosity that leads to acts of vindictive retaliation, and to ebullitions of wrathful calumny. In it we behold a lamentable instance of how passion may sully the noblest intellects. We are bound, however, in vindication of the illustrious author, to state that, when he wrote this pamphlet, he keenly felt the manifold evils which had resulted from Napoleon's ambition; and at a later period he acknowledged all that was due to the genius of the emperor. M. de Chateaubriand has suffered much from the instability of his political principles; he has been alternately idolized and spurned by the royalists. Among the legitimists of the present day he is looked upon almost as a revolutionist, whilst the friends of the present government consider him, together with the great orator Berryèr, as one of the most formidable champions of legitimacy.

However various may have been M. de Chateaubriand's impulses during his political career, however great the versatility of his ideas, it must be allowed that he has always sacrificed his personal interest to what he considered his duty; he has never hesitated to sacrifice his ambition to his conscience. It would be unjust also to forget that, from 1815 to 1830, he always maintained that the best means of governing France were to be found in an unalterable fidelity to the charter of Louis XVIII. He saw in it the anchor of safety for his country, which he had beheld tossed by so many violent gales; and he became, therefore, one of its firmest and most faithful supporters. The consistency of his political life during these fifteen years is, we believe, undeniable, although it may be objected that he sent the French army to crush liberty in Spain; but in his last work, the *Congrès de Vérone*, published about two years ago, he vindicates his conduct as a statesman during that period, when the French went to Spain in 1823 to relieve Ferdinand from the constitutional demands of a part of his subjects; and he has, we think, succeeded in washing away that blemish on his character according to the ideas of modern France. It may also be added, that M. de Chateaubriand's apparent inconsistency in his political career has often resulted from his being in advance of the parties he joined at different periods; from his bold independence in withstanding

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their demands when opposed to his own conscientious principles; and from his carelessness in mortifying their pride and selfishness whenever he thought that just provocatives had been given. Let it also be remembered, that now in his old age, now that he stands but the wreck—a noble one, indeed—of former times, after having been so often at the pinnacle of power, he is a poor man; let us honor him for his disinterestedness—a virtue too rarely manifested not to merit especial commendation.

When, at a later period of the restoration, it was considered by the government advisable, as a mode of inspiring confidence, to call to the highest dignities of the realm the men of the revolution and of the empire, M. de Chateaubriand wrote his *Monarchie selon la Charte*, the aim of which was to controvert the opinion generally entertained at the time that there was a want of capacity among the royalists, and a monopoly of talent among their adversaries. In this pamphlet M. de Chateaubriand vehemently attacked the Napoleonist and revolutionary party, whose ideas, he said, could never coincide in a sincere and legitimate manner with the sacred rights of the Bourbons. He seems persuaded in it that the old royalist party was gaining ground in public estimation, while it is notorious that the reverse was the fact. But his object, in thus insisting that the old aristocracy must and ought to enter into the affairs of the State, was perhaps to give to that stagnant class of French society a quickening impulse—a movement of activity; besides which, he had observed that the revolutionary element existing in the charter was acquiring predominance over the royalist element, and the latter, thus sinking, he strove to resuscitate.

The political life of M. de Chateaubriand from 1815 to 1830, although, on a candid survey, free from incongruity, is in fact divisible into two distinct portions: the first characterized by the defence of that spirit of the olden royalty which prevailed in the charter, because he saw it threatened by the modern revolutionary ideas; the second, by the defence of its liberal elements, because he felt the necessity, at a later period, of opposing the old aristocratic ideas which, in spite of all his efforts, still continued stagnant and exclusive. Thus, he could not fail to incur the displeasure of both parties. He inevitably fell into the dilemma of inclining to opposite sides; and, though at different times and under altered circumstances, his offence was unpardonable in the eye of party. But, let detraction say its worst, there is one fine unclouded feature in his character, which will always commend him to esteem, and that is, a firm and constant vindication of the

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liberty of the press, of the unfettered expression of opinion, the privilege of a truly free people, from which emanate all social regenerations. The charter granted by Louis XVIII. was evidently to M. de Chateaubriand the magnet which alone could lead to a mysterious alliance of the past with the future: and the elder branch of the Bourbons owes its ruin to its obstinacy in not following the line traced by those legitimists, who, wiser and more experienced than the rest, possessed a clearer insight into the state of things, a more correct appreciation of the men as well as wants of their age.

Since 1830, M. de Chateaubriand, in his pamphlets, especially in a very celebrated one, entitled *Du Bannissement de la Famille de Charles X.*, and in another on the imprisonment of the Duchess of Berry, has approached the verge of republicanism, and joined in friendly communion Armand Carrel and Béranger; nay, he has penned on Napoleon divers eulogistic pages, in which he exalts that conqueror to a level with the Hannibals and the Charlemagnes. His style, so poetical, so highly-wrought in his *Génie du Christianisme*, becomes in these productions firm, concise, forcible, and brilliant; he expresses in perspicuous language his deep-seated convictions, and with an energetic simplicity altogether devoid of that rhapsodical tinsel with which he has overloaded his other works. Many parts of those pamphlets are written as in lines of adamant; and in perusing them, we are led to marvel at so complete a transformation in one of the most purely imaginative minds of the epoch. There is, however, one feeling that pervades all his works, and it is one of bitterness—of lassitude of soul and disappointed hope; at all periods of his life, his favorite themes have been the ingratitude he has experienced, the chilly touch of death, the silent tomb, the very worms that are to banquet on his body. And now that, after so many triumphs and vicissitudes in politics and literature, the grave of the illustrious author awaits him—is already prepared for him at St. Malo, and has been visited by him in solemn mood—those who have ever sympathized with him, who have read and meditated on the diversified effusions of his genius, must be seized with an indefinable feeling of melancholy, on reflecting that his highly sensitive mind has never been happy; that, notwithstanding all he has achieved for fame, it is trifling when compared with what he might have effected; and that he, so great a worshipper of glory, is not destined to enjoy that prolonged posthumous renown, which has, doubtless, always been the great object of his ambition, and to which few, perhaps, could advance more legitimate claims.

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One of the greatest historians of the age, M. Guizot, who, since 1830, has acted so conspicuous a part in the affairs of his country, belongs to the history of the fifteen years of the restoration, by his political publications, although he was not in the Chamber of Deputies until the close of that period. In 1816, he gave to the public his pamphlets entitled, *Du Gouvernement Représentatif*, and *De l'Etat Actuel de la France*, and another on Public Instruction, especially directed against the Jesuits, who were then seeking to monopolize all the branches of education. "There are certain persons," he says in the latter, "who apparently wish that public education should not be religious but superstitious—not armed with force and morality, but made subservient to the most execrable prejudices. Such men think that science is the ruin of morality; that knowledge is the ruin of nations; that reason destroys religion; that, apart from ignorance and the servitude of intellect, there is no safety either for morality, for religion, or for the throne; and that, to prevent the return of revolutions, it is requisite to revert unreservedly to those laws and usages of former times, which manifestly engendered such ignorance and servitude."

M. Guizot was at that time one of the organs of the liberal and constitutional party, opposed to the Jesuit ascendancy, under which Charles X. crouched and acted, until his final expulsion. From 1820 to 1822, he published a series of political tracts, fraught with views and matter of the most lively interest, and admirably suited to the exigencies of the times. He was then in intimate association with those eminent parliamentary orators, among whom, at a later period, he was himself to occupy so lofty a position. In his pamphlet, *Du Gouvernement de la France depuis la Restauration*, he avowed the political opinions advocated by the eloquent leaders of opposition—General Foy, Royer-Collard, and Benjamin Constant; he maintained, with luminous vigor, the impossibility of a return to bygone ideas and principles; he portrayed, in vivid colors, the futility of reliance, by the throne, on support from that antiquated aristocracy which had so long pined in domestic concealment or in foreign exile; and he finally demonstrated, with peculiar eloquence, the necessity of the ancient dynasty seeking to recruit its strength and vigor, by an infusion of the youthful ideas current at the epoch.

This portion of M. Guizot's political career may be styled theoretical and speculative, though giving ample promise of practical ability; since 1830, he has engaged in active public life. As Minister of Public Instruction, he obtained grants and originated

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measures for the diffusion of knowledge through all, even the lowest classes of society; and effected more in that important department during the short time he held it, than his predecessors had attempted in a long lapse of years. In the Chamber of Deputies, he has been distinguished for an impressive and logical style of eloquence, and in conjunction with Casimir Perier, as an ardent and indefatigable defender of the new constitutional government, upholding it as the firmest bulwark against the inroad of anarchy and the excesses of democracy. M. Guizot is not one of those rash theorists, who shoot far in advance of their age, and entertain impracticable ideas. He is a man of sagacity and learning, deeply imbued with the philosophy of history, and cognizant of the peculiar features and tendencies that characterize the epoch; the difficulties and impediments that obstruct the path of the politician, he fully comprehends; he would advance step by step, accepting improvement from whatever quarter it may proceed, and however insignificant in measure; yet is he inflexibly obstinate in his ideas of progress and as to its extent, so that it would often seem as if the age must wait and regulate its movement according to his views of feasibility, pausing till he see fit to lead and stimulate it in its onward course.

Previous to 1830, as we have stated, he was content to enlighten his countrymen by publications, wherein he evinced the talents, the foresight, and the judgment befitting an eminent statesman; and so general was the impression of his political capacity, though hitherto confined to the closet, that, after the revolution of that year, he was called upon, with universal applause, to preside over the destinies of the new government. Since then, the distinguished part he has taken in affairs, the high and various offices he has filled, are known to the world. But, although apparently absorbed in duties of so harassing and commanding a nature, he has not dropped his pen. The *Revue Française* has enjoyed the privilege of publishing his political views from time to time. An article written by him on *Democratie dans les Sociétés Modernes*, is a treatise on social organization, of great ability; it may be looked upon as the manifesto of his opinions—of his party—of the *Doctrinaires*. The statesman begins by a refutation of the two systems which have been at different times propounded and maintained: first, that every one is subject to his own volition only; and, secondly, that the legitimate sources of power dwell in the manifestation of all volitions. The fallacy of such principles is perhaps sufficiently obvious; but how much more perfectly so, when demonstrated by M. Guizot, with his

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usual force and perspicuity! He proceeds to state on what basis the right of suffrage should be established; and he holds that the power of exercising the franchise can only be grounded on capacity: "and the capacity I am alluding to," he adds, "is not the mere intellectual development, or the possession of such or such a particular faculty; it is a profound and complex fact, involving spontaneous authority—an understanding of actual positions—a comprehension of the divers interests we are called to regulate; in short, a certain aggregate of faculties, of knowledge, and of means of action, that embrace the whole of man, and decide, with much more safety than his unassisted intellect, his line of conduct and the use he will make of power. Political capacity dwells where these conditions meet and are united; and the right does not exist where they are wanting." This may be considered an indirect justification of the present state of electoral rights in France. With respect to universal suffrage, he says that it is only necessary in a social crisis; that it is the ruin of authority, and reigns with tyranny when it is absolute: "*œuvre terrible*," he adds, "*mais qui a ses heures marquées dans les decrets de Dieu*;" and he concludes by affirming, that this formidable mean and instrument must be abandoned as soon as the work of destruction is at an end. M. Guizot gives afterwards a picture of the calm and placid state of *his* democracy in France; he alleges that the respective positions of the poor and the rich are now perfectly established; but acknowledges, at the same time, that there is a great deal more to be done than is generally believed towards the moral and physical improvement of the majority of the people.

These assertions, however, touching the present political state of France, seem to us founded on misapprehension; we venture to assert that the spirit abroad amongst the French people is very different from that represented by M. Guizot; and to be assured of the fact, we have merely to consider the importance of the late movement in the country in favor of electoral reform, the unexpected rejection of the endowment for the Duke of Nemours, and the growing strength and popularity of the liberal sections of the Chamber. There are, nevertheless, in this dissertation on Modern Democracy by M. Guizot, many admirable passages, containing most sound and sagacious views of wholesome liberty; in the latter part of it especially, when he says—"The predominant, urgent necessity, the moral, and at the same time the national, interest of our present state of society, is to become elevated and organized, since it is in elevation and organization that it is principally deficient. Ideas, aspirations, customs, social sit-

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uations, and internal arrangements, everything among us, has need of regulation and expansion. Now, the old fashion of democracy is prejudicial in the extreme, inasmuch as it lowers and degrades everything—persons as well as things. We are dragging ourselves on the leading-strings of the revolution, instead of standing upright and advancing. A return of the past is dreaded; let, then, our modern democracy forget what its past was; let it rise to the altitude of the position it has acquired; then only will it be fit for its present fate—then only can it reckon itself sure of its future."

When M. de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* becomes the subject of our remarks, we shall find it gives a very different exposition of the political tendencies of France; and as M. de Tocqueville speaks only of what he has observed in Europe as contrasted with America, free from personal views or party bias and from any mere love of theory, we are justified in deeming his testimony uninfluenced by political passion, and therefore substantially impartial: whereas M. Guizot writes, doubtless, as a statesman prepossessed in favor of particular views; bent rather upon upholding his own system than portraying that which exists in reality; speaking more in accordance with his wishes than with his discernment; and, above all, intent upon propagating principles with which he has been identified for the greater part of his life, because he judges them the best adapted to promote the welfare and prosperity of his country—principles assuredly sound and constitutional, but not in harmony, it would seem, with the democratical ideas now so rapidly gaining ground, nor, consequently, with the discontented feelings fermenting in France.

Another work of merit, on the same important subject, has been written by M. Edouard Alletz. His two volumes, entitled *De la Démocratie Nouvelle*, evince great knowledge of the present state of society, as likewise, a fervent and sincere Christian feeling. M. Alletz, who was already known to the public by his *Esquisses de la Souffrance Morale*, obtained, in consequence of his work on democracy, a high rank in the religious conservative party. He has achieved for that party in France—the Resistance Party, as it is called—although in an inferior degree, what M. de Tocqueville has effected, with such transcendent force, for the movement party.

M. Louis de Carné, who owes his election to the Chamber of Deputies solely to his literary reputation, has published a very able book on contemporary politics, under the title of *Du Gouvernement Représentatif en France et en Angleterre*, consisting

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of parallels between the electoral systems of France and England; but his work, as well as that of M. Alletz, is confined to a narrow circle of readers, while any production from the pen of M. Guizot always commands universal attention, not only from his superiority of intellect, but also from his influential character as a statesman, and his high political station.

For these reasons, M. Guizot's article on Modern Democracy created a very great sensation.[1] It appeared, as I stated before, in the *Revue Française*, at the end of 1837; it was followed, three months after, by another masterly dissertation on the religious state of modern Europe, entitled *De la Religion dans les Sociétés Modernes;* and, towards the close of 1838, the same Review published an article which we deem the most excellent of all, especially when considered with reference to the delicacy of the subject it treated, containing a truly admirable eclectic dissertation on the necessity of peace and alliance between antagonist sects in Europe, under the name of *Du Catholicisme, du Protestantisme, et de la Philosophie en France.* We earnestly recommend it to readers of every persuasion and country, as calculated to accelerate that harmony and good understanding which will yet exist, it is to be hoped, between all religions and nations. It is almost needless to add, that M. Guizot's ideas on the subject of such an alliance have met with simultaneous dissents from Catholicism and Protestantism. Two refutations, especially, from the latter communion, have been remarked and admired; the one by M. Bouvet of Strasbourg, and the other by the learned and eloquent French Protestant pastor, M. Ath. Coquerel.

The following beautiful passage emphatically conveys the opinion of M. Guizot on the religious condition of his countrymen. He proposes as a remedy, that the Catholic and Protestant churches should proclaim peace between themselves, in France at least, and should work together for the religious regeneration of the country—a noble, philanthropic, and eminently Christian scheme, but one, we fear, that it will require ages to realize:—

"French society is suffering from moral maladies of very different natures. There are some who are tired and disgusted with uncertainty and disorder of mind; they have need of a port where no tempest can penetrate, of a light that never flickers, and of a hand that will never let them stumble. They demand from religion support for their weakness, rather than stimulants for their activity. It is requisite that religion, while she elevates, should also sustain them, and, while touching their hearts, should also subjugate their intelligence; it is necessary for them that,

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while she animates their internal life, she should, at the same time, and above all things, give them a profound sentiment of security. Catholicism is marvellously adapted to this turn of mind, so frequent of occurrence in our days. It possesses satisfaction for such desires, and remedies for such sufferings; it is able at the same time to conquer and to please; its anchors are strong, and its prospects full of attraction for the imagination. It excels in giving occupation to the soul at the same time that it allows it to rest; it is acceptable after a period of great fatigue, for, without leaving the soul to become cold or inactive, it eases it of much labor, and lightens for it the burden of responsibility." . . . .

"For other minds, also diseased, also estranged from religion, more of intellectual and personal activity is required. These, also, experience the want of returning to God and the faith; but they have got a habit of examining all things for themselves, and of admitting only what they have acquired by their own labors. They are anxious to fly from incredulity; but their liberty is at the same time dear to them, and their tendency towards religion is caused more by thirst than by lassitude. It is to souls such as these that Protestantism finds access, since, while it tells them of piety and faith, it allows and encourages them to make use of their reason and liberty. It is accused of being cold; but this is an error. Protestantism, by making a constant appeal to free and personal inquiry, penetrates far into the soul, and readily becomes an indwelling faith, in which the activity of the intelligence keeps up the fervor of the heart instead of extinguishing it. Catholicism and Protestantism should never lose sight of the condition of French society, since it is upon that they have to act. It is not between Catholicism and Protestantism that the contest is now to be waged—the contest of ideas and for mastery; impiety and immorality are the enemies with which both one and the other are equally called on to contend; to re-animate religious life is the work to which they are called—a work of immensity, for the evil itself is immense. An examination ever so slight into the moral state of these masses of men, with minds so fluctuating and hearts so void, who have so many desires and so few hopes, and pass so rapidly from fever of the soul to torpidity, is enough to fill one with melancholy and alarm."

We must now revert to the period of the Restoration, to notice the extraordinary effect, in exciting discontent and irritation against the government, of the caustic pen of Paul-Louis Courier and the stirring songs of Béranger. The celebrated Paul-Louis Courier was an officer of artillery in Bonaparte's time, and

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highly distinguished as a linguist; he restored to Greek literature—from a manuscript he found in the Laurentian Library at Florence, while serving in the Italian campaigns—a passage in the pastoral (Daphnis et Chloé) of Longus, the absence of which had made the text inexplicable. When he left the army he retired to a small estate in Touraine, from which place all his pamphlets are dated. Paul-Louis was essentially a man of his time and of the people; he felt an instinctive sympathy with the poorer class, whence arose his profound esteem for the industrious and laborious, and his aversion towards the idle and the rich, who feed, he says, on the labors of the poor. In his "Address to the Chambers to plead the Cause of the humble Conspirators of the small Parish of Luyan," as he styles the pamphlet, and in his "Simple Discourse on the Royal Gift of the Estate of Chambord presented to the Duke of Bordeaux," he displays a keen and cutting irony against all and everything appertaining to the court or nobility, and this always under the guise of such perfect good nature as to be at once inimitable and irresistible. His infinite wit and gracefulness defy all criticism, and still more all translation; he must be read, understood, felt, to be judged. The whole nation was aroused by his "Simple Discourse on Chambord;" the government had him tried, and succeeded in procuring his condemnation to three months' imprisonment, during which he daringly promulgated another diatribe, under the title of *Procès de Paul-Louis Courier*, so that all the court gained by its process was to give greater popularity to his name, the usual consequence of prosecution, and to provoke a fresh volley of witty and lacerating sarcasms.

But perhaps the pamphlet in which his gracefulness of style and force of humor and description are most abundantly exhibited, is the one which he called "Petition in Favor of some Villagers who were Forbidden to Dance on Sundays." It is well known that a custom prevails in Roman Catholic countries of devoting the Sunday afternoon to amusements. A *curé*, more rigid than others, had forbidden the pastime of dancing to those villagers as vicious and impious; and Courier undertook their cause, moved thereto more particularly, doubtless, by the favorable opportunity afforded him of striking another blow at the clergy, the Jesuits, and the government, as well as at the great and the rich; while, by way of contrast, he took occasion to depict the innocent pleasures of the villagers, and all the charms of a pastoral life, in such enchanting and glowing colors, that we seem to be perusing

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Gessner, or to be transported to the rural scenes of Teniers or Wouvermans.

Paul-Louis Courier, however, notwithstanding his exuberant wit and great learning, was often misled by his prejudices and passions; and yet, even in such aberrations, he always manifests such perfect sincerity, candor, and *bonhomie*, that we can scarcely refrain from indulging a certain partiality and fondness for his very errors—a weakness the more pardonable towards a man who generally viewed every question in its most humorous light. But there is one signal exception to this characteristic of Courier to be found in his constant antipathy towards Napoleon, at a time, too, when admiration of the emperor was worked to the highest pitch of delirium by the songs of Béranger and the reaction against the Bourbons. In this sentiment, Courier was sincere, stern, and inflexible; he had seen war in all its horrors, and he held its devastations, its massacres, and woes, in perfect abhorrence. It would have been quite useless for any philosopher to urge on him that war was a necessary evil, a cause of progress, of expiation, of civilization; a smile of incredulity would have been Courier's only answer to all the most forcible and eloquent arguments of the rhetorician.

The principal objects of Paul-Louis's hostility, therefore, were Napoleon, the Bourbons, and the clergy—all being more or less symbolical of depotism, the theme of his incessant raillery and reproach; and to give expression to this ever-brooding hate, he seizes every opportunity, however inappropriate, to plant a thrust at the parties who have provoked his ire, often startling the reader by some sudden flash of vengeful wit when least expected from the context. His style bears evident marks of his intimate acquaintance with the Greek language; and it may be affirmed, as a general proposition, that no French author, during the nineteenth century, has evinced a taste in composition so purely Attic. His pamphlets have been compared by some to the Letters of Junius; but, if in elegance of language he sometimes approaches that model, the parallel in other respects is fallacious; indeed, we should be rather disposed to assimilate him with Dean Swift or Sydney Smith, although he assuredly excels either of those writers in claims to originality, being in his own country perfectly unique and unprecedented. Lord Brougham, in our opinion, fails to manifest his usual sound and excellent judgment, when he contends, in his *Statesmen of the Times of George the Third* (Character of Lord Mansfield), that Courier has been overrated. The noble critic might himself be justly accused of

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being too prone to underrate and depreciate, upon hasty and insufficient grounds, as is exemplified not only in the instance of Courier but in others we could adduce: his estimate of Sheridan is a flagrant case in point.

We shall be pardoned for an allusion to the tragic catastrophe that robbed Courier of life. As he was returning to his residence one evening—on the 10th of April 1825—the road led him by the side of a wood; from the thicket a bullet pierced him in a mortal part. His body was found weltering in blood and lifeless, but no trace of the assassin was discoverable. A fearful solution was given to the awful mystery; the government, royalty itself, was charged as the instigator of the crime—a transcendant homage to his influence as a political writer! The imputation was calumnious; but it not the less strikingly portrays the position he occupied in public estimation. It was afterwards proved that the murderer, far from being a political instrument, was a bloody panderer to the passions of an adulterous wife.

In 1835, Armand Carrel published a complete edition of Paul-Louis Courier's works, which he illustrated with numerous valuable annotations, and enriched with an able and interesting biography of the inimitable pamphleteer.

Béranger's songs were even more fatal to the restoration than Courier's works, because their easy flowing metre, their merry laughing vein, rendered them more adapted for popular acceptance. His ditties were in the mouths of all, whilst the classical sarcasm and subtle fancies of Courier were above the common taste and understanding. Béranger, as well as Courier, was imbued with the prepossessions of a love of the people, but he differed widely in his admiration of Napoleon. The ambition of the warrior had at one time provoked his satire, in the exquisite effusion entitled *Roi d'Yvetot;* but, when he beheld the emperor gasping on the rock of St. Helena, the poetical close of so brilliant and fabulous a career made a deep impression on his mind, and he ever afterwards, in the most heroic and lofty of his stanzas, labored to instil into his countrymen feelings of gratitude and veneration towards Napoleon, who had shed such lustre on the French nation. His efforts were so successful, that he worked the whole country into a state of delirium; the government took alarm; the poet was prosecuted, tried, and acquitted; but, being arrested a second time, he was condemned: after undergoing several months' imprisonment, he was restored to liberty, with the halo of martyrdom around him, more than ever the object of popular enthusiasm, and additionally incensed against the race

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of Bourbons. It was not only against royalty, however, that Béranger directed his satirical powers; the nobility and the clergy likewise felt the keenness of his lash; and it may be objected against him that he has too indiscriminately decried the reigning power, howsoever constituted and composed: he has been the antagonist of every government established in his time. This is not the fitting occasion to speak of his poetical merits; but we may be allowed to remark, that many of his productions, modestly called by himself *chansons* or songs, are the offspring of a genius of the highest order, and will be admired as long as the French language exists. We will enter more at large into the characteristics of his muse in another part of our work; our immediate purpose was simply to note the extraordinary influence exercised by him in a political sense.

Since 1830, pamphlets have been more rare, notwithstanding the success attending those of M. de Chateaubriand, and others by MM. Thiers and Salvandy. The success and popularity of these, however, were temporary, because they merely treated some particular theme of evanescent interest; limited, therefore, in object and circulation, they failed to evoke that general sympathy, that pervading excitement, which Courier's works aroused. The same may be averred, in a great measure, of the productions which have emanated from M. de Cormenin, whose pen has inflicted the deepest wounds received by the present government. M. de Cormenin has naturally been compared to Courier, but there are many points of distinction between them; the inimitable irony and apparent *bonhomie* of the latter remind one more of La Fontaine; he was, moreover, the organ and expression of feelings entertained by a majority of the nation, and might have provoked a revolution. M. de Cormenin, on the other hand, confines himself in every one of his writings to some definite question—to the measure that for the time being he opposes; and though victory may have often crowned his efforts, their remembrance passes away with the occasion. His pamphlets have usually been addressed to the electoral body and to the chambers, and their aim to prevent what he considered encroachments on the part of the new sovereignty; at the same time, he often descants on abuses in a truly ultra-liberal strain. His style is extremely witty and pungent; yet his popularity, although considerable, is as different in its nature from that enjoyed by Courier, as his characteristics vary from those of that celebrated individual.

One of M. de Cormenin's most successful pamphlets was one

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published on the Civil List some years ago, when the court wished the Chamber of Deputies to invest the Duke de Nemours with the valuable estate of Rambouillet as an appanage; on which occasion he urged the objections to which such a measure was open in so forcible and masterly a manner, and the public voice so unequivocally responded to his arguments, that the government thought it prudent to withdraw the proposition. Another, written on a nearly similar question in the spring of 1840—namely, on the desire of the king to obtain a grant of 500,000 francs a-year for behoof of the same Duke de Nemours on the event of his marriage—has enjoyed nearly equal celebrity. In this pamphlet, entitled *De la Dotation du Duc de Nemours*, he showed, in such bitter and energetic language, how unjust and exorbitant was the demand of the king—how immense was the fortune of the reigning family—that the Chamber of Deputies, under the obvious influence of his diatribe, and very unexpectedly, refused to hear discussion on the subject, and forthwith proceeded to vote in silence on the ministerial proposition, which was rejected by an immense majority. These instances tend to corroborate the statement we have previously hazarded, that political discontent in France now affects the form of a regular parliamentary opposition; it finds expression in the superior classes, and no longer vociferates in the streets.

Another well-known publication of M. de Cormenin, apart from his incidental pamphlets, is a small volume called *Orateurs Parlementaires*, published at the end of 1837, consisting of sketches on the political character and oratory of the principal deputies. In these portraitures he has given free scope not only to his own democratical views, but also to his political passions and personal antipathies, and this with an acrimony which greatly lessens the admiration we might otherwise be disposed to feel for his sagacious observations and brilliant phraseology. The sketches on the orators of the restoration—those on Arago and Berryer, for instance—are compositions of the highest order in their sphere; whilst that on M. Thiers is written with the bitterest gall; and his description of M. Guizot is so sullied by injustice and vituperation, as to be odious and revolting.

We have mentioned the name of M. de Lamennais when speaking of the philosophers belonging to the theological school. We then stated that his great work, on Indifference in Religion, was a remarkable production, distinguished alike for beauty of style and for energy and vehemence of thought, and that the sensation it created had been unequalled since the appearance

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of M. de Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme.* When speaking of it in our essay on philosophy, the greater necessity of dwelling on the eclectic school prevented us from entering so largely as we could have wished into its merits and defects. We shall be pardoned, doubtless, if, even thus out of place, we attempt to give a more perfect idea of the chief publication of a writer whom, in this department of our task, it will be our duty to bring prominently forward. Diverging, then, from our immediate subject, we shall presume to select, for more particular reference, the chapter headed "The Importance of Religion with Reference to Man," as the most forcible and brilliant part of the work, and as the best specimen of the style of the author after his annotations on the *Imitation de Jesus Christ:* it is, in truth, a sublime discourse on happiness, far excelling anything written on the same subject by the ancients. We do not mean that M. de Lamennais surpasses Plato in reasoning, but he derives an indisputable superiority from the streams of Christian light which continually pour upon and animate him. This chapter, then, contains some of the most affecting truths that can stir the human heart, as in the following passage:—"The affections themselves are broken by time, by interest, by death. Often there remains only that corroding listlessness which forms the leaven of human life. Oh, man! when wilt thou be convinced that thou canst attain substantial happiness only by seeking it within thyself; that so inestimable a possession should be beyond reach of the misfortunes continually befalling us; and that it can come only from God?"

And again—"Religion begins by opening before us the eternity whereof time is but the portico, and shows us in its depths, as it were, a never-ending flight of steps, by which our intelligence, continually creeping upwards, must approach, under favor of illimitable duration, the ineffable Source of eternal truth; and this infinite truth it already gives and bestows on our soul, of which it is the aliment and the life, and which even here below possesses it most fully through faith, love, and hope; for hope, a transient modification, and taken in relation to the present condition of a natural and indestructible sentiment, is but a believing, confiding love."

And he continues till the end of the chapter to dwell in the same strain on the happiness that religion gives to the soul. There are also some eloquent passages on Idolatry and the Jews, and an admirable chapter entitled "Jesus Christ." In the chapter "On the Importance of Religion with Reference to Society,"

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M. de Lamennais reproduces the political ideas of MM. de Bonald and De Maistre; we find in it the same contempt for the sovereignty of human reason; the same paradoxical arguments in support of passive obedience; the same taunts and invectives against the principles of constitutional liberty.

But, as we have already intimated, his opinions underwent a gradual change. The first evidence of the modification they had received was afforded by a pamphlet, entitled *Progrès de la Révolution*, published by him in 1829; and afterwards further testimony was given in his two letters to the Archbishop of Paris, so remarkable for their subdued violence, and for the vein of petulant irony running through them—portents and symbols of a rebellious spirit. The revolution of July dealt the last blow to the ideas of theological absolutism cherished by M. de Lamennais.

M. de Lamennais saw the necessity of breaking with the past, of accepting the new movement, and of grafting religion on democracy. Because the old society was annihilated—because the ancient monarchy to which he had been devoted was no more, despite all the efforts of the restoration, was he to abandon Catholicism in that France, on which, in his idea, the destinies of the world depend? Certainly not. He continued the advocacy of his religion, by adopting and upholding the principles of liberty. The daily paper, *L'Avenir*, was established by him, wherein he spoke a language highly pleasing to a nation entertaining broad liberal ideas and tendencies, and well-inclined at the same time to repudiate religious incredulity. Nothing could be more *à propos*. Remarkable, however, for the warm sympathy it expressed for the cause of Poland, for the attacks it contained on Russian despotism, and for the boldness of the doctrines it inculcated, this paper aroused the wrath of the clergy. We have seen how M. de Lamennais referred to the see of Rome; how his opinions were condemned; how he apparently submitted, and remained quiescent under the anathema pronounced against him and his adherents, retiring in solitude to his seat in Brittany, when, after a lapse of three or four months, the whole nation was startled by the appearance of the *Paroles d'un Croyant*.

The *Paroles d'un Croyant* is a pamphlet in the biblical form, breathing extreme democratical ideas. It was denounced with horror by some, and hailed with rapture by others. Its arguments have nothing new; its style has often been attempted, in imitation of the books of Job and Isaiah; nevertheless, its attractive form and universal sympathies endeared it to the multitude—old and young, students and artisans—all received it as the

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gospel of a new era; and the voices of the critics, of the rich and powerful, who decried the book and its author, were drowned in the general acclamation of the mass. It would almost seem that the work had created a greater sensation than was expected by its author, or that he thought he had gone too far; for, in his subsequent pamphlets, *Le Livre du Peuple* and *De l'Esclavage Moderne*, he obviously strives to temper his former impetuosity of tone; he assumes a more moderate strain, one more in harmony with Christian resignation; he makes the idea of duty more prominent than that of right, and breathes a purer feeling of love. It is to be remarked, however, that neither of them met with the extraordinary popularity of the *Paroles d'un Croyant;* indeed, another production of the kind, equally devoured by the public, might have engendered fatal consequences, by working the lower class into a dangerous state of effervescence.

What can be the object of M. de Lamennais? What feelings, what intention, can have dictated his *Paroles d'un Croyant?* Is he the interpreter—the prophet of a new faith? Does he wish for a new schism in the church? Whither would he lead his fellow-creatures?—to a theocracy? Why has he thus veiled his thoughts under a mystical and parabolical form? We will not, of course, presume to answer these questions; their solution will transpire in the course of time: all we can say here is, that no man in the nineteenth century has created such a paroxysm of excitement in his country, principally through the poetic-religious style in which he embodied his thoughts. Happily, the fermentation consequent upon his pamphlet soon subsided; it was not followed by anything equal to it, either in feeling or merit; for let us add, that amidst the violence predominating in the *Paroles d'un Croyant*, there are some of the noblest —of the most exquisitely told truths, that can find an echo in the human heart.*

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* There is, for instance, a melancholy charm in the following picture of virtue, poverty, and pious resignation:—

"It was a winter's night. The wind howled dismally, and the snow whitened the roofs.

Under one of those roofs, in a small room, were seated, laboring with their hands, a grey-headed female and a young girl.

And from time to time the old woman warmed her pale blue hands at a small grate. An earthen lamp dimly lighted this poor abode, and a ray fell expiringly on a picture of the Virgin suspended to the wall.

And the young girl, raising her eyes, regarded in silence for some mo-

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But in 1840, M. de Lamennais seemed to throw aside all reserve, and gave a new turn to the faculties of his mind. He declared open and implacable war against the present government:

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ments her venerable companion; at length she said to her, 'Mother, you have not always been in such destitution.'

And there was an inexpressible sweetness and tenderness in her voice. And the woman, whose locks were so gray, replied, 'My daughter, God is the Lord—what he does is well done.'

Having uttered these words, she paused for a while; afterwards she resumed:

'When I lost your father, I experienced a grief I believed inconsolable: still you remained to me; but I then felt only one emotion.

I have since reflected that if he lived and saw us in this distress, his heart would break; and I have recognized the goodness of God towards him.'

The young girl made no answer, but she bent down her head; and some tears she strove to conceal fell on the web she held in her hands. The mother added, 'God, who has been good towards him, has been good likewise towards us. What have we wanted, whilst so many others want for all things?

It is true, we have been obliged to accustom ourselves to little, and to gain that little by our labor; but is not this little sufficient? And have not all, from the beginning, been condemned to live by their toil?

God, in his mercy, has given us daily bread, and how many are without it!—a shelter, and how many know not where to lay their heads!

You too, my daughter, he has given to me: of what shall I complain?'

At these last words, the young girl, in deep emotion, fell at the knees of her mother, took her hands, kissed them, and leaned, weeping, on her breast.

And the mother, making an effort to clear her voice, said, 'My daughter, happiness does not consist in possessing much, but in hoping and loving abundantly.

Our hope is not fixed here below, neither is our love; or if it be, it is but transiently.

After God, you are all to me in this world; but this world will vanish like a dream, and therefore it is that my love ascends with you towards another world.

When I bore you in my bosom, I one day besought, with unusual fervor, the Virgin Mary, and she appeared to me during my sleep, and it seemed to me that with a celestial smile, she presented to me a little child.

And I took the infant that she presented to me, and as I held it in my arms, the Virgin Mother placed on its head a crown of white roses.

A few months afterwards you were born, and the sweet vision was always before my eyes.'

Thus saying, the woman of silvery locks trembled, and pressed the young girl to her heart.

A certain time thereafter, a blessed soul beheld two luminous forms ascend to heaven, and a cluster of angels accompanied them, and the air resounded with their songs of gladness."—*Paroles d'un Croyant*, XXV.

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his pamphlet on the existing political crisis of France, entitled, *Le Pays et le Gouvernement*, is written with a pen steeped in gall; nothing can surpass its virulence and acrimony. He adduces therein, it must be confessed, many faults of the government, and many wounds inflicted on the country; but he takes a malignant pleasure in magnifying the latter, in drawing from them themes of fiery comment, in order to irritate and inflame the nation. The pamphlet was seized, by order of the government, and its author was severely punished.

Among the distinguished men who have been called the disciples of the Abbé de Lamennais, the most renowned, unquestionably, is the Abbé Philippe Gerbet, a man eminent for the force of his reasoning, the clearness of his metaphysical comprehension, and the amiable philanthropic tendencies of his mind. A small pamphlet, of about two hundred pages, published by him in 1826, and entitled, *Des Doctrines Philosophiques sur la Certitude dans leurs Rapports avec les Fondements de la Théologie*,* placed him at once among the most profound thinkers of the age; it contains more philosophical science than many voluminous philosophical works, and may be considered an eloquent appendix to the greatest conceptions emanating from the theological school of philosophy. We naturally find in it, as in many other productions of the same class, opinions diametrically opposed to our own principles; but, nevertheless, we cannot hesitate to allow its superiority in general thought and style, and its value with reference to some of those unalterable points of religion and philosophy, which all true Christians and rational thinkers must share in common. In 1831, the Abbé Gerbet published his *Coup-d'Œil sur la Controverse Chrétienne;* it is an excellent *resumé* of the religious discussions that have filled hundreds of volumes. This latter work is little known beyond the circle of ecclesiastics; but the learned abbé has lately added to his well-earned reputation by an "Introductory Course to the Study of Christian Truths," which appears in a periodical known as the *Univers Catholique*, a publication recommended by the eulogies of M. Guizot.

At the period of the revival of religious feelings, when France was absorbed in admiration of the writings of Chateaubriand and Lamennais, and of the poetry of Lamartine, M. de Genoude undertook a new translation of the Bible: the moment was favora-

* [Of the Philosophical Doctrines on Certainty in their Relations with the Foundations of Theology.]

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ble, and it became quite an event in the politico-religious world. This new translation possessed great attractions for a public disposed to study the Bible; the poetical mould in which it was cast ensured it an universal acceptance; for although the best among the preceding translations—especially that of M. de Sacy—were not surpassed in the historical and descriptive parts, the lyrical books are, in M. de Genoude's version, rendered with incontestible superiority; insomuch, that the celebrity it so rapidly acquired yet survives, and it still continues to occupy a high station in public estimation, despite all the criticisms with which it has been rudely assailed. Of late, however, it has had to contend with a formidable rival. A new translation of the Bible by Cahen, only concluded at the end of last year, has been spoken of by all competent judges in the highest terms of praise and admiration; it bears, it seems, a character of fidelity and biblical grandeur, unequalled by any of its predecessors. After his version of the Bible, M. de Genoude published in a collection justly entitled *Raison du Christianisme*, all the great works on Christianity by the fathers of the church, and such Catholic philosophers as had elucidated the doctrines of the gospel. It contains all the testimonies given by men of genius, from Bacon and Kepler down to Schlegel and Cuvier, in favor of Christianity—a noble task, executed with consummate skill and discrimination. M. de Genoude, although an ecclesiastic, is the proprietor and chief editor of the *Gazette de France*, the only daily paper of any note which maintains the cause of legitimacy with ability and decorum, and yet has never lost that deep taint of priestly absolutism which is so repugnant to the present ideas of France.

We have now reached a point when it behoves us to speak of two singular social theories, that have been propounded in this the nineteenth century; one of which may be said to be extinguished, and the other to be in a state of progress: we refer to the doctrines of Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier—of the "Saint-Simonians" and the "Fourierists." An outline of these doctrines, a reference to their struggles and consequences, is incidental to any investigation into the literature of France during the nineteenth century. Our estimate of literature is not confined to rhetorical and poetical productions; we understand by literature the whole intellectual movement and progress of a nation; but, even if we did not thus extend the boundaries of literature, the Saint-Simonians and Fourierists have been literary in every sense of the word: they have promulgated their theo-

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ries through the press, and some of the first—of the most eminent literary men of our time, have been enrolled in their ranks.

The greatest efforts of the Saint-Simonians have been exerted in vindicating the reputation of their master; they had originally extolled him in so hyperbolical a strain—speaking of him as the founder of a new religion, as a new prophet, and so forth, that they drew down on the head of Saint-Simon a storm of virulent abuse and vituperation, and provoked imputations against him of gross impiety and vice. If they had merely represented him as a profound thinker, as a learned philosopher, as a man whose works and labors might exercise influence upon the destinies of humanity, Saint-Simonism would naturally have met with more indulgence, and been spared much of the malevolence and hostility which it encountered. In sketching the following brief notice of Saint-Simon, it is, we hope, needless to affirm that we have been actuated by the usual impartiality which guides us, partaking neither the enthusiasm of his disciples nor the animosity of his adversaries.

Saint-Simon belonged to an illustrious French family of that name, which upheld the pretension of being descended from Charlemagne by the Counts of Vermandois. His disciples relate that he had scarcely reached his seventeenth year, ere he had himself awakened every morning in these words, "Arise, M. le Comte, you have great things to perform." They also add, that he was very early agitated by a presentiment of his great destinies. Nothing is too ridiculous for the extravagance of fanaticism. The life of Saint-Simon was chequered with many singular vicissitudes of fortune. He served in America under Washington, and attained the rank of colonel at the age of twenty-three; but he detested war, and only engaged in that of America because he fancied her emancipation promised to be a mighty step in the progressive march of civilization. When the French Revolution broke out, Saint-Simon was in Spain; he returned to Paris, but kept aloof from all political strife; he beheld the overthrow of an order of things which personal considerations must have endeared to him; but he was above all common egotism, and if he abstained from taking part in the strange and eventful transactions of the time, repugnance to abet what he deemed blind and indiscriminate destruction, was assuredly the cause of his seclusion. Saint-Simon attached no value to fortune, but as an instrument of action: he has himself stated that his chief ambition was to found a scientific school and establishment for industry on an extensive scale—a project difficult

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of execution to a man whose family had been ruined during the revolution, in common with thousands of others. Meanwhile, he joined a friend in a lucrative enterprise, from which he withdrew, after prosecuting it for seven years, with a fortune of about six thousand pounds. Thus auspiciously ended his commercial career. Thenceforth he devoted his time to the acquisition of knowledge; he fixed his residence opposite the Polytechnic School, and daily attended its most distinguished professors, whose favor and countenance he secured by the amiability of his manners and the interesting nature of his conversation. When he judged he had studied a sufficient length of time under mathematicians and astronomers, he betook himself to the School of Medicine, near which he selected his abode, and lived among the most eminent physiologists of his day.

Saint-Simon subsequently explored England and Germany: he everywhere found science in a state of anarchy, a prey to extreme individualism; and he vainly strove to inculcate the blessings of union and harmony in the learned world, no longer held together by any great social principle. If we are to believe all the anecdotes related of him, he must have been a singular compound of energy and vanity, often laboring under absence of mind and forgetfulness of common sense, which have rendered him obnoxious to infinite ridicule. As, for instance, when he passed through Geneva, he solicited the favor of being received at Coppet, and thus tendered his homage to Madame de Staël: —"Madame, you are the most extraordinary woman in the world, as I am the most extraordinary man in it; were we united, what might be expected of our children!" Madame de Staël had too much sense not to laugh at so strange a salutation. We do not give this anecdote as positive, though it is related and believed by several of his biographers; but, at all events, Saint-Simon would not be the first superior man subject to unaccountable eccentricities. After his travels, he remained a whole year plunged in dissipation; his friends have alleged, in his justification, that it was to acquire experience of life; but true superiority scorns such unworthy means of attaining knowledge. That year of dissipation ruined Saint-Simon; he fell into absolute penury, and passed through many of those blighting scenes in which others greater than he have been tried; he suffered privations with patience and courage, and in this dismal state of destitution began his important labors. Napoleon had desired the Institute to trace the course of science since 1789, with a dissertation on its actual state, and on the means of aid-

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ing its progress. Saint-Simon thereupon wrote his Introduction to the Scientific Labors of the Nineteenth Century, and a Letter addressed to the Board of Longitude, which, together with essays on the Encyclopædia, and some Memoirs on the Science of Man, form the series of his philosophical works.

When the restoration superseded the empire, the name he bore might doubtless have entitled him to share the honors and largesses bestowed by the Bourbons on members of those ancient families known to be friends of their dynasty; but Saint-Simon was above such vulgar ambition. He remained in obscurity: the descendant of Charlemagne was content to fill the situation of a copying-clerk at the Mont-de-Piété, with a salary of forty pounds a-year. It was whilst living in this depressed condition that he published (in 1819) a pamphlet entitled *Parabole*, consisting of sarcastic reflections on the aristocratic pretensions and intrigues of the time, which were carried to a ludicrous and vile extreme. This pamphlet excited great indignation in the breasts of certain high personages by its malicious pleasantry and disagreeable revelations; its author was indicted, and the near relative of one of the most celebrated noblemen of the court of Louis XIV. was subjected to a harassing prosecution, and narrowly escaped severe chastisement, for having preferred science and genius to birth and fortune. Shortly after this event, he finished the works which form the basis of his doctrine, as afterwards propagated by his disciples: they consist of *La Réorganisation de la Société Européenne*, *L'Industrie*, *L'Organisation*, *La Politique*, *Le Système Industriel*, and *Le Catéchisme Industriel*.

Saint-Simon then possessed so little to recommend him, that he had to drink deeply of the cup of mortification prepared for all impoverished authors; he could not find any publisher for his works, and he fell a prey to all that corroding anxiety too often characteristic of the aspirant in literature. He was so pinched by poverty that, during the whole of a severe winter, he denied himself fuel in the hope of being enabled to defray the expenses of publication; nay, he often endured the pangs of hunger he refrained from satisfying; and all this ardor and self-denial was cheered or recompensed by no expression of sympathy from any of his fellow-creatures—solitary and unknown, he had to bear his sufferings. One day his courage, resignation, and energy forsook him—he forgot his Creator, and attempted to terminate his life: but, before blackening his memory as many have done, with this awful crime, surely the appeal of justice and pity should be heard. The heartlessness of society and the selfishness of in-

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dividuals weigh at times heavily on the soul, incense the mind after having discouraged it, and fill the heart with bitterness, impelling to acts of despair. How many noble intellects, moulded for tenderness, social love, and happiness, have appalled the world by their accents of fury and hatred! Saint-Simon recovered from his guilty attempt, and resumed his labors and hopes. As a proof that all his ideas on future social development were to be found in, and emanated from, the words of Jesus Christ, he called his last work, *Le Nouveau Christianisme*. His religious system is in general harmony with his social theories as promulgated by his disciples; only it contains even stranger opinions, and some more impious than novel. For example, he addresses the same reproaches to the Catholic Church that have been urged by all seceders, expressing the same admiration for the words of Jesus, whom he calls *L'Homme-Dieu* (the Man-God). He has no mercy for Luther; reviling him for having introduced a morality inferior to that becoming true Christians, and for not having organized societies in the interest of the poorest and most numerous classes; he accuses him of having annihilated the poetry of Christianity, of having deprived it of the attractive charms of the fine arts, and vehemently upbraids him for requiring that all should read the Bible, which he considers as highly dangerous.

After the completion of *Le Nouveau Christianisme*, Saint-Simon fell for some months into a state of excessive languor, the result of his fervor, anxiety, and troubles, and expired on the 19th of May 1825, in the arms of several of the disciples he had at last gathered around him, among whom were M. Auguste Comte and M. Olinde Rodrigues. A few hours before his death, he said—"For the last twelve days, my friends, I have been occupied with the means of ensuring the success of our enterprise; for three hours, notwithstanding my sufferings, I have been endeavoring to give you a summary of my thoughts: you have reached a period when well-combined efforts will secure immense results . . . the fruit is ripe, you will be able to gather it. . . . My last work will not be understood immediately. It has been said that all religious systems were to disappear . . . a great error! Religion will never leave this world; it is only undergoing a reformation. . . . Rodrigues, do not forget this, and remember that, to accomplish great things, ardor and passion are necessary. My whole life may be summed up in one single aim —to ensure to all men the freest development of their faculties." He afterwards remained silent for some minutes, murmured a

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few words more, sighed—"*L'avenir est à nous*" (the future is ours), laid his hand on his head, and died.

Whatever may have been the errors of this man in private life, as well as in his social and religious theories, let us not forget that he suffered agonies both of mind and body for a generous conviction; let us remember the words he has written upon himself, which are known to have contained but a feeble picture of the truth. "For fifteen days I have lived upon bread and water, without a fire; I have even sold my clothes to defray the expenses of copying my work. It is from a love of science and of public happiness, from an ardent desire to terminate by gentle means the frightful crisis in which European society is now engaged, that I have been reduced to this state of distress. I can therefore avow it without blushing, and ask for the assistance necessary to enable me to proceed with my labors."

Soon after the death of Saint-Simon, the periodical publication, *Le Producteur*, which he had projected, and which is the enterprise he alluded to on his deathbed, appeared under the direction of M. Olinde Rodrigues. It soon drew under its standard a number of distinguished men: in the first instance, MM. Bazard, Enfantin, Cerclet, and Buchez, the philosopher we have formerly mentioned as author of the *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française*. Some months after, M. Michel Chevalier, the distinguished author of the *Lettres sur l'Amerique du Nord*, MM. Carnot, Fournel, Barroult, Chasles, Duveyrier, and others, joined the Saint-Simonians; and at a still later period they were joined by Reynaud and Pierre Leroux, the authors of the *Encyclopédie Nouvelle;* by Saint-Chéron, the translator of Ranke's History of the Popes; by Guéroult and Charton, two very clever critics, and by many others; we find the name of Armand Carrel among the editors of the *Producteur*. The Saint-Simonian sect had not yet been formed; its members were scattered individuals, who, professing strange principles of liberty and innovation, sought to counteract the absolutist ideas then in progress; but the *Producteur* became the rallying point for the new association.

The existence of the *Producteur* was not, however, of long duration; it perished for want of funds to support it; whereupon many of the Saint-Simonians, Bazard, Enfantin, and others, began to give public lectures on the new doctrines. They gradually propounded their principles, their new ideas and hopes. It is not our intention to give them in all their details; we shall venture only on a brief outline of their theory. They com-

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menced by illustrating, with superior talent, the two great evils of the present age—the absence of religious faith and the distress of the lower class, with the insufficiency of legislation to remedy it. Thereafter they introduced their less rational theory on the total abolition of hereditary right: their law was in substance—"To each according to his capacity; to each capacity according to its labor"—not contemplating the immediate spoliation of one-half the world, but the eventual division of property according to every one's efforts and participation in promoting social welfare.

The Saint-Simonians subsequently expounded their theory on education, the leading dogma of which upheld the necessity of education being adapted to each disposition, and to the general wants of the community, based upon the principle of a general diffusion of knowledge. On the subject of jurisprudence, they scrupled not to assert that the present state of the laws was radically vicious; all being devised to punish and none to reward, they lacked the essential attributes of Divine justice. They proposed a jurisprudence grounded on fear and love, more prompt to reward than to punish: they denounced the institution of the jury as faulty, and indicative of the deficiency of the present laws; they wished to substitute a system of atonement, mental culture, and repentance, for death and penalties, the exactions of vengeance; and furthermore desired that all the divisions of society, its magistracy, and so forth, should be marked by professions, and be dependent on acquirements. As to women, the Saint-Simonians proclaimed their enfranchisement from the subordinate state they actually hold, and the abolition of marriage, which they stigmatized as a monstrous traffic; they would allow no other tie between man and woman but that of morality, honor, and other similar obligations.

It will be readily conceived that opinions and doctrines of such startling novelty excited general curiosity, and tended to agitate the lower classes. The Saint-Simonians proceeded to organize a hierarchy. MM. Enfantin and Bazard were appointed chiefs of the sect; they formed a college, and adopted a costume which they persevered in wearing on all occasions. It consisted of a cap and frock-coat, somewhat similar to that worn in the time of Francis I., but extremely simple and plain; to which must be added a majestic beard flowing down the chest. This peculiarity of habit, joined to their folly in asserting their tenets to be a new religion, and Saint-Simon a prophet, could not fail to expose them to the shafts of ridicule.

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Meanwhile, the revolution of 1830 exploded, and a crisis ensued in which the conflict of ideas and passions threatened to plunge France anew into chaos and anarchy. Among the thousand plans proposed from multifarious quarters to save the country, a Saint-Simonian proposition was placarded through Paris, signed by Bazard and Enfantin, wherein the ideas of organization maintained by the sect were enforced as the surest guarantees of prosperity and civilization. But the Chamber of Deputies was far from enjoying the calm security it so unequivocally manifests at the present time; all popular movements made it uneasy; and the propagation of such a socialism as that of Saint-Simon was not at all agreeable to a body more conspicuous for wealth and selfish timidity than for brilliant parts. M. Dupin and M. Mauguin straightway ascended the tribune, and held up to the abhorrence of the chamber a set of monsters who preached the community of property and the community of women! Bazard and Enfantin addressed a very able and apparently satisfactory answer to the Chamber of Deputies, explaining with perspicuity and moderation their ideas touching the equal division of property and the enfranchisement of women. This was the most prosperous period of the sect: by an unaccountable caprice on the part of the public, large sums of money were lodged in the treasury of the society; a daily paper called the *Globe* was purchased, to which the title of *Journal de la Doctrine de Saint-Simon* was given; proselytes flocked from all directions. In Paris the doctrine was publicly taught in four lecturing establishments, and six churches were erected in the provinces.

But peace and harmony were not to remain long in the Saint-Simonian family. A misunderstanding arose between the heads of the sect, Enfantin and Bazard, provoked, it is believed, during a discussion on the rights of the poor and of woman; discord ensued, and with it the decline of the sect. Bazard, deeply hurt, withdrew, and died a few months after, broken-hearted, as has been alleged, at seeing all his hopes thus fatally crushed. On occasion of another great discussion, Enfantin estranged many of the ablest members of the sect; and he took as the associate of his labors and headship M. Olinde Rodrigues. It was at this period that all appearance of prudence vanished from the councils of the Saint-Simonians: they squandered large sums in their so-called "festival of sanctification," an outlay which, added to the expenses of propagating their doctrines, exhausted the funds of the society. Thousands of workmen, who had been attracted by the hope of obtaining employment, were dispersed; great dis-

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content ensued, and the government thought it was high time to extinguish the sect. The chiefs were prosecuted, and troops employed to prevent their meetings and to shut up their churches and schools. The heads of the sect, Rodrigues and Enfantin, separated; the latter retired to his house at Menilmontant with forty disciples, whence he promulgated his *Catéchisme et Genèse du Saint-Simonisme*. The public was admitted to witness the pursuits and worship he and his followers adopted; large crowds, drawn by a very natural curiosity, assembled daily. But the police interfered a second time, and put an end to this kind of comedy; the Saint-Simonian leaders were tried and condemned to imprisonment. M. Enfantin, on recovering his liberty, migrated to Egypt with a few disciples: he is now forgotten; no one inquires what has become of him; it is not even known whether he has returned. Saint-Simonism is extinct, probably never more to be thought of, save by those of inquisitive minds, who, indulging a propensity to meditate on the Utopian ideas conceived by extraordinary thinkers, may safely venture within the giddy maze, because their sagacity and good sense are sufficient to enable them to distinguish between the rational and practical and the absurd and extravagant contained in any given system.

Still it is but just to allow, that many of the opinions inculcated by the Saint-Simonians are to be found in the philosophical writings of all ages: and, moreover, that the popularity of their tuition, and the inquiring spirit diffused thereby, have left on the present period, traces of influence, which may perhaps increase at a future time. We detect symptoms of it in the works of more than one contemporary writer of celebrity; some esteemed literary productions of our time are partially impregnated with the doctrines taught by the descendant of the Duke of Saint-Simon. We need merely adduce, in corroboration of our statement, the works of M. Michel Chevalier, whom we have already named, especially his *Letters on North America*, an excellent work, well worthy of perusal as an appendix to M. de Tocqueville's, though differing widely in plan and object; for the *Letters* are chiefly dissertations on society, industry, etc., whereas the *Democracy* is exclusively political. When the *Globe* was bought up by the Saint-Simonians, Michel Chevalier was its editor: he is still tainted more or less with their peculiar dogmas.

Charles Fourier appeared and wrote before Saint-Simon, but his doctrines only attracted the notice of the public after the interest excited by the Saint-Simonians had turned attention to

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such speculations. Fourier passed the greater part of his lifetime in dependence and poverty, and thus learned to understand and feel for the miseries of his fellow-creatures.* Many of the ideas of the Saint-Simonians have been taken from Charles Fourier's works; for instance, the belief that all the interpretations given to the words of Moses, and to those of our Saviour, are erroneous; and also, that all our passions have a good tendency, but are drawn into a vicious direction; as well as several other absurd opinions. Fourier published in 1808, a *Théorie des Quatre Mouvements*, a work which remained unknown to the public, but which has been largely used by later writers. Fourteen years afterwards, he wrote his *Traité de l'Association Domestique Agricole*, a book in which he exhibits his whole system, and therefore necessary to be perused by those who are desirous of acquiring a complete knowledge of Fourierism. Herein Fourier boldly proclaims himself the successor of Sir Isaac Newton; he says that the immortal author of the *Principia* has discovered material attraction, and he the attraction of passions (*l'attraction passionée*). To Newton he grants the science of planetary life; to himself the science of human life. We must confess that the discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton are much more satisfactory to our mind than those of Charles Fourier; for, as others have remarked, the *attraction passionée* has nothing very striking or novel in it; it may have been known for ages; it is a universal sympathy that has often been dreamed of.

This latter work was followed by *Le Nouveau Monde Industriel*, published in 1829; by a pamphlet against Saint-Simon, and another against Robert Owen; and by various articles in the *Phalanstère*, merely intended to elucidate particular points of his doctrine. We shall be pardoned, we trust, if we decline to analyze Fourier's system, or his notions of God and man; the first is frequently obscure, and the latter are of formidable extent and variety. The subject will be found discussed with remarkable learning and philosophical acumen in a book by M.

* He was born at Besançon in 1772. His father was a woollen-draper in easy circumstances. Charles, on leaving school, was sent to Lyons, where he entered as a clerk in a commercial establishment; and, being afterwards desirous of travelling, he obtained the confidence of a very respectable house, in whose business he travelled over the whole of Europe. He always manifested an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and studied almost every branch of science. In 1793 he received four thousand pounds as his share of his father's property, and with this commenced business in Lyons; but his little fortune perished in the revolutionary tempest, and he himself narrowly escaped the guillotine; he was ever afterwards employed as a clerk in commercial houses at Rouen, Bordeaux, Marseilles, or Lyons; from 1822 to 1837 he resided in Paris.

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Louis Reybaud on "Modern Socialists," in which the theories of Saint-Simon and Robert Owen are likewise examined with equal merit and impartiality.

The system of Fourier contains divers mystical doctrines at which the superficial contemners of reveries have laughed heartily, and which have doubtless given ample scope to the gibes and sneers of adversaries. For instance, he divides nature into three external and indestructible principles, viz., God, matter, and justice or mathematics. Herein he evinces, at all events, perfect originality. In the omnipotence of the Deity, he finds the cause, and in his justice the reason, of general destinies; the universal volition is, he thinks, made manifest in "universal attraction"—attraction in humanity, animal attraction, and attraction in inorganic bodies. It is this attraction which, whirling upon its axis, produces and destroys continually, and is nevertheless a constant cause of preservation. From thence result five attractions, which are—material attraction, or attraction of the world, discovered by Newton; emblematic attraction in the faculties of substances; attraction of passions and instincts; atomical attraction, or that of imponderous bodies; lastly, the attraction of man towards his future destinies. Universal analogy is the result of universal attraction—the result of a mathematical law, which Fourier has stated without demonstrating. All passions, he says, have their analogy in nature; thus the faculties of friendship may be compared to a circle, those of love to an ellipsis, and so on.

We may charitably presume that such wild conceits were the pastime bubbles of an eccentric and effervescent nature; for what means the unsupported dogma confounding justice with mathematics? What becomes, in such an hypothesis, of the divine origin of justice? What can be thought and made of all these attractions? Fourier's ideas touching our own globe are not a whit more sane or rational. He asserts that this world is to last 80,000 years, whereof 40,000 will be passed in a state of progression, 8000 in a state of stagnation, and the residue, or 30,000, in a state of deterioration and decline. Happily, Fourier himself attached little importance to these unsubstantial vagaries, and complained bitterly that they had constantly given occasion to ridicule, while the useful parts of his doctrine passed unnoticed: "Of what consequence," he says, "are these accessories, compared to the grand paramount object, that is, the art of organizing a well-combined industry, from which will result morality, harmony amongst the three classes—the rich, the poor, and the middle class—the impossibility of revolutions, universal unity, and perfectibility?"

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Fourier professed other maxims of a kind opposed to the general sentiments of mankind. He maintained that the idea of duty is of human origin, while he was equally careful to evince that the tendency to every sort of passion is part of the work of God. But the graver part of Fourier's system consists in his idea of general regeneration: he considers a general elective system as the germ of all future social development, and would submit every title, every dignity to election. He proposes an equal division of men. The smallest subdivision would be in groups—from 24 to 32 forming a series—which groups would collectively form a *phalange*, or phalanx. A phalanx, comprising about 1800 people, would inhabit a place called *phalanstère*, which is intended to be a neat and commodious building, provided with everything requisite for a life of comfort and liberty, according to the taste of all, in solitude, or in community, and in which the means of all would be proportionate and according to a common basis. The meeting-rooms, refectories, workshops, kitchens, all would be arranged for general service, and fitted with articles necessary in occupations of labor, peace, and amusement. Touching the funds to support this amount of population in the fruition of so much happiness, Fourier affirms that a *phalanstère* for 1800 persons would not require much more expense than four hundred cottages in an ordinary French parish containing that number of inhabitants; and that the *phalanstère* once built, being spacious, handsome, and solidly constructed, might remain a century without needing any material alteration or repairs, while, in the same space of time, the wretched habitations of a French parish are built and rebuilt six or seven times. The building once completed, there would be a common account of the expenditure and economy of the society: thus one kitchen would perform the functions of four hundred kitchens, and so on; there would be but one gigantic washing establishment, everything to be worked by means of steam-engines. At the same time, a complete change would be wrought in the culture and in the aspect of the country; immense tracts of land, cultivated by the association as if they belonged to one individual, would be fertilized by the employment of all the means and appliances to be ensured by the outlay of a great capital, whereby the powers of production would be forced to the greatest possible height. The same auspicious results would be experienced in the manufacturing establishments: that infinity of uncomfortable, solitary, dismal workshops, would be replaced by handsome, cheerful, wholesome working-places, in which all the powers of

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machinery would assist man in rendering his labor easier, more agreeable, and regular. The profits acquired by this process of association would be, according to Charles Fourier, almost quadruple those obtained under the present state of things.

In the *phalanstère*, distribution would be regulated according to the capital brought into the common stock, and to the nature of the work and labor performed. Each would possess at the same time his share of property in the produce, divisible upon the infallible principles of right and justice. The most laborious and repulsive tasks, which in our social system are always the lot of the poorest, would be the most amply remunerated; so that great labor might be productive of riches, and banish inequality and rancor, as existing between different classes. Poverty could not exist in a *phalanstère;* for the obligation of the society is to ensure what is necessary to each of its members; as to the distribution of shares and of work, and the reward of industry and talent, all would be settled and assigned by election—all depend on the fiat of the majority.

An agglomeration of *phalanstères* would form a city—capitals of provinces—of empires; and, lastly, one great metropolis; for Fourier comprised the whole world in his project. The Bosphorus seemed to him the most convenient locality for the metropolis of the world. Another feature of the Fourierist scheme, is the plan of creating special corporations, called *armées industrielles*, commanded by those who excel in every branch of industry, art, science, and so forth, and destined to proceed to every place in need of their assistance.

The universal system of election proposed by Fourier involves an almost unbridled license to human passions, whereby the idea of sovereignty in such an organization is obviously futile; yet he gives a chief to each phalanx, and establishes one great federal supremacy in the person of an *Omniarque*, emperor of the globe! In all cases, in every clime and region, everything in the shape of soldiers, guards, and the like, would be done away with; no more executioners, judges, and tribunals. Liberty, under this theory, would exist in its most illimitable form, since, according to Fourierist principles, all passions are legitimate, and equality indispensable through all the ramifications of society. Education being the same for all in every phalanx, it results that all functions are accessible to all, and the roads to fortune and eminence open to every individual indiscriminately. The eradication of evil and unhappiness out of the world was the great dream of Fourier; but we deem it unnecessary to pursue the investi-

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gation of his schemes, as we believe that even this brief outline of them must have been sufficient to demonstrate their impracticability in the minds of nearly all our readers.

During our observations on the French socialists, the name of Robert Owen of New Lanark has often occurred to us, not only from the simultaneous propagation of his theory with that of the French Utopias, but also from the great similarity which often exists between his ideas and those of Saint-Simon and Fourier, although in many essential points they widely and radically differ. But we will refrain from any parallel, as it might lead us too far from our subject, and be content to transcribe a passage from M. Louis Reybaud's work, which characterizes the three socialists: it occurs at the close of his philosophical notice on Mr. Robert Owen:—

"On bringing our remarks to a conclusion, a reflection strikes us. Here are three eminent men, Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, who, almost in unison, together, at the same moment, are seized with a common idea—that of founding a new system of welfare and proclaiming a new morality. All three, after modes different, it is true, and very unequal in respectability, have attempted a better organization of labor, and one has affirmed that the law of future destinies should be—love, another attraction, a third benevolence. This manifestation, in England and France, has been simultaneous; and after having studied, with some candor, the works of these three men, we feel justified in asserting that each of them is an inventor on his own part, and has drawn inspiration only from himself. It has happened with them, as it chanced with Newton and Leibnitz, who divined at the same time, the one at London, the other at Leipzig, the law of infinitesimal quantities and the differential calculus. For, notwithstanding the judgment of the Royal Society of London, it may well be contended at the present day, that if the discovery of Newton were real, that of Leibnitz was not less so. Thus, at the hour when, become indispensable to the progress of the world, certain ideas descend from on high and fall on our heads, all the intellects that can admit and nurture them are struck by the same shock, and impelled to the like manifestation."

Fourierism was scarcely known or heard of while the Saint-Simonians were rendering themselves so conspicuous, and attracting the attention of the country. Charles Fourier died at Paris on the 10th of October 1837; but his doctrine, far from following him to the grave, has since attained a certain degree of force and consideration, superior to that enjoyed, it is believed,

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by any other Socialist system. Several men of talents are indefatigable in their zeal and efforts to propagate it; they have established a very able periodical publication, called *La Phalange*, under the direction of M. Victor Considérant, author of the *Destinée Sociale*, and other works of merit, as the organ of the sect and the vindicator of its principles. It is understood that a large sum of money is amassed, for the purpose of erecting and making a first experiment of a *phalanstère;* and, as we have elsewhere stated, a petition has been presented to the chambers by the disciples of Fourier, soliciting permission to carry their social theory into practice, without fear of molestation from the government. We may state, moreover, that, during various excursions in Switzerland, and sundry parts of Germany, we have often found, to our great astonishment, that Fourier's works and doctrine had, through the zeal and ardor of his disciples, penetrated among those populations, and met with a favorable reception from persons of the first respectability and influence in their respective countries. His disciples are now endeavoring to spread their principles in England through a weekly publication, entitled the *London Phalanx*, which has been most extensively circulated, and wherein all relating to the doctrine, and the works on which it is based, is given in abundance, as well as with taste and discrimination.

Nevertheless, all these social theories must undergo the same fate, and ultimately sink into oblivion; for, when has it been seen that such utopian ideas have been realized? The originators of such theories, in their ardor for universal happiness, never fail to go infinitely beyond what is possible and real; it almost seems as if it were their province and destiny to wander into extremes; but still it is the duty of governments and statesmen to consider well even opinions of this exaggerated nature, as symptoms of a diseased condition of things. Although man can never attain that pinnacle of happiness which these theories contemplate, yet we cannot conceal from ourselves that the state of various European countries—of France and England especially—such as we now behold it, is very far from satisfactory as to the condition of the working-class, whether as respects their physical comfort or their social position. We are inclined to think that many salutary hints and remedies might be found, even in the theory of Charles Fourier, not undeserving the attention of legislators, as well as of private philanthropists, meditating on the future welfare of their native land and of the human race.

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CHAPTER FOURTH.

POLITICAL TENDENCIES—(Concluded).

Importance of M. de Tocqueville's Work on American Democracy.—Sojourn of MM. de Tocqueville and De Beaumont in the United States—Publication of their first Works.—M. de Beaumont's *Marie*.—Character of M. de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.—Object of the Work.—Democracy among the Ancients and the Moderns.—Analysis of the Social and Political Condition of the United States in the two first Volumes.—Of the Democratic Tendencies in France.—Manners of Democratic Nations.—Education.—Institutions of the Americans.—Characteristics of American Democracy.—Material Spirit of the Americans.—Advantages of the United States.—Of Slavery.—Future Destiny of the Union.—Inductive Views of M. de Tocqueville on the Futurity of Europe compared with America.—Object and Character of M. de Tocqueville's last two Volumes.—Parallel of the Democratic Spirit and Manners of France with those of America.—Observations of the Critics.—Effects of Democratic Influence.—General Aspect of Democracy—its Features in France.—Conclusion of M. de Tocqueville's Work.—Political Oratory—its Changes in France.—Error prevailing in England on the Subject.—Mirabeau and Lord Chatham.—Military Eloquence of Napoleon.—Revival of Oratory in the Nineteenth Century.—The Chambers during the Restoration.—Royer-Collard.—Manuel.—General Foy.—Benjamin Constant.—Struggles of the Liberty Party.—Revolution of 1830.—M. Odilon Barrot—Casimir Perier.—M. Dupin.—M. Guizot.—M. Thiers—M. Thiers and Sheridan.—M. Arago.—M. Mauguin.—Legitimist Party.—M. Berryer.—Political State of France.

After having given a sketch of the political publications and theories which have been promulgated of late years, and which have exercised a certain influence on the spirit of the country, we naturally arrive at a work more than any other expressive of the tendencies of France and of Europe at large at the present time, to wit, that of M. de Tocqueville, entitled *Democracy in America*.

It chanced that, some time previous to the dethronement of the elder Bourbons, two young members of the bar received from the French government a mission to visit the United States, for the purpose of inquiring into the penitentiary system of that country. On their return, which occurred soon after the revolution of 1830, the two commissioners in question, M. Alexis de Tocqueville and M. Gustave de Beaumont, prepared a very able report on the subject of their mission, which, for the sagacity of the

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observations and the extent of the information it embodied, richly merited the encomiums passed on it. *Le Système Pénitentiaire aux Etats Unis*, in truth, is a luminous and authentic record of facts, elucidating one of the most difficult questions that can engage the attention of legislators, and will assuredly remain ranked among that small number of books cherished as invaluable by nations and governments.

Subsequently, each of the associates availed himself of the opportunities he had enjoyed of studying America, and comparing it with the ancient world of Europe, to give the results of his experience and reflection in separate publications. M. de Beaumont composed his *Marie, ou l'Esclavage*, wherein he has given all the attraction of a novel to a philosophical study on America; it is a graphic, melancholy tale, interspersed with pictures of manners and customs illustrative of the spirit of American society, and is invested with a high degree of interest. On the other hand, M. de Tocqueville directed his attention more particularly to the social and political constitution of the United States, aspiring, as it were, to be the Blackstone of America; for we hold the commentaries of that distinguished judge to contain the most perfect exposition, not alone of the laws but likewise of the social organization of England. Another great name occurs to us, in approximation with that of M. de Tocqueville, renowned for vindication of the rights of humanity—the name of Montesquieu.

M. de Tocqueville has revealed to Europe the *spirit* of the American laws, deduced from a comprehensive survey of usages and institutions, with a depth of observation, a vigor and originality of thought, an independence of mind—in short, with so many transcendent attributes—that the accessory beauties of style are thrown into the shade and overlooked. Its various qualities combine to render the book on American Democracy one of those great and lasting compositions that reflect honor and glory, not only on the author, but also on the country and era which have the good fortune to witness their appearance.

M. de Tocqueville has decomposed, with a firm and skilful hand, the curious mechanism of this new government; in a calm and dispassionate spirit he investigates its action, effects, impulses, and destinies, gradually leading his reader to a profound knowledge of America, while upon manifold questions of the gravest interest to Europe, affecting its future progress and welfare, he throws unexpected streams of light, from the extensive range of his points of view and the generalizing faculties of his intellect. But, perspicuous as is the work in its details, comprehensive in

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its design, consistent in its parts, illustrative of the force and action of elements which, like hidden springs, escape the notice of the ordinary observer, yet its recommendation rests even more peculiarly, perhaps, on the philosophical acumen and equanimity wherewith he discusses the conflicting powers of the social system, and on the exquisite judgment he evinces, when he turns from the immediate object of his inquiry in the American States to the condition of the communities of Europe, and to the question of democracy in our own hemisphere. "This book," he says, "is written to favor no particular views; and, in composing it, I have entertained no design of serving or attacking any party. I have undertaken, not to see differently, but to look further than parties; and whilst they are busied for the morrow, I have turned my thoughts to the future."

The social and political condition of the United States is, in itself, a phenomenon unparalleled in the history of the world. What other instance do we find of an immense population, united, prosperous, happy, without any of the elements of union and force which have hitherto ensured the power of empires—without any basis of support from a social hierarchy, that has everywhere else formed the bond of populous communities? Where do we discover a free people, flourishing in such complete equality, and with such purely democratical institutions? Previous to the establishment of the federacy of the United States, the republican form of government cannot be said to have existed on any large and extended scale. Holland and Switzerland cannot be adduced as examples in point; Venice was simply an oligarchical league, governing subdued provinces by means of mercenaries; Rome was something of the same sort, and when the rights of citizenship were extended to allied nations, the monarchy of the Cæsars was found necessary to preserve a state of unity. The celebrated republics of Greece were tumultuous townships, ennobled in history by heroic achievements and intellectual acquirements. But all these republics, as well as others which have existed under another denomination, without any exception, were constituted on aristocratic principles: they were not democratic—for, how small their number of freemen compared to the population, and how great the distinction of classes, the difference in the rights of each, the variety of privileges attached to particular orders and conditions! The word "democracy" was invented two thousand years ago, but the thing itself did not exist; equality had not yet been discovered.

It was, therefore, in the country of the greatest of great men—

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in the country of Washington—that real practical equality, in all conditions, in every right and franchise, was seen for the first time as the basis of the constitution of a free people; and this state of things has hitherto appeared as if it could only exist in North America, for, when democratic ideas crossed the Atlantic, they only produced anarchy and military despotism. It has been reserved for M. de Tocqueville to discern, that, although a republic of twelve or fifteen millions of citizens is doubtless a novelty in the world, there is nothing so very miraculous in it; for political institutions are mere forms—the social organization is the great and material point in the fortune of nations. A society constituted on the old hierarchical basis may afterwards receive indifferently a republican or monarchical form of government, flourish during centuries, and aspire to great destinies, like the Romans formerly, and Russia in our time.

The political principles of the Americans, the equality of all the members of their great community, their independence, their participation in the sovereign power, in short, their absolute democracy, form the topics of M. de Tocqueville's consideration in the first two volumes of his work, published in 1835. We have already characterized his remarks as singularly dispassionate and totally free from all prejudice or enthusiasm; and, as a striking instance of the impartial view which he takes of both sides of a question, we may adduce the manner in which he states the mixed and respective good and evil of democratic and aristocratic institutions, so fully and fairly, that the reader, left to form his own opinion, is only rendered more competent to decide upon a just appreciation of both. The positions of the author are not absolute but relative; and, though approving the skilful adaptation of a new political system to the wants of a new people, he leaves the reader to adopt such conclusions as to the value and fitness of the democratic principle in itself, as may result from a knowledge of what it is able and what it is unable to effect.

Such, it may be said, is the fundamental object of the work; and it is admirably expressed, at great length, in the Introduction. We are debarred from entering upon his analysis of the American constitution: it is a work so minute in its details, so full of speculative wisdom, that any cursory review or notice is incapable of affording a just idea of its various merits: we must refer to the book itself. We shall therefore confine ourselves to some of the culminating points which stand connected with the present success and future stability of democratic republics in that country, and inquire into the nature of the changes and perils which

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threaten them, particularly as they bear on the tendencies which have been manifested in France.

We have stated that the general and all-pervading equality of conditions is the basis of the democratic institutions of the United States. This principle was, in point of fact, recognized from the foundation of the colonies; it has ever since influenced the laws, far more than it has been influenced by them. The equality of conditions, then, with all its moral and social consequences, is the material element we are to keep in view when judging of the present political aspect of the union, and the chances of its permanent prosperity. The root and reason of that success which has been denied to the rich territory of the South American States, and the practical application of those laws, imitated in vain, lie in the manners of the people. The origin of the Anglo-American republics, their peculiar circumstances, the earliest incidents of their history, show that the equality of conditions was not only a consequence but an integral part of their earliest institution.

The account which M. de Tocqueville gives of the piety, simplicity, and virtuous freedom of the Americans, is one of the most interesting parts of his work. The author takes every opportunity of testifying to the beneficial influence of religion in America—its fertilizing alliance with liberty, and the impossibility of a republican form of government without deep-rooted religious feelings. "Religion," he says, "sees in civil liberty a noble exercise of the faculties of man; in the political world a field given by our Maker to the efforts of intellect, free and powerful in its sphere. Satisfied with the place assigned to her, she is aware that her power, being established through its own strength, and reigning without adventitious support in all hearts, is thus more firmly established. Liberty sees in religion the companion of her struggles and triumphs, the cradle of her infancy, the divine source of her rights. Religion is considered by liberty as the safeguard of manners and morality, these being the guarantees of the laws and of her own durability."

Here we more clearly detect the error and ignorance of French republicans, and the source of all their excesses, from the Reign of Terror down to the numerous conspiracies which have disturbed the public peace and progress since 1830. The ultra-democratic party in France has long vociferated the words "liberty" and "republic," while it has always proved unequal to the exigencies, to the science and dignity, of a republican form of government. This class of republicans, however, has, we believe, almost disappeared, overpowered by the sounder constitutional

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ideas that now prevail throughout the nation. Now there is a grave democratical spirit of intellectual independence blended with the return to religious feelings which we have noticed; but in this re-action religion has lost much of its spiritual character; indeed, France and America may be said to be the twin disciples of philosophical republicanism. In France, Catholicism has terminated in Ultra-Protestantism. In America, English Protestantism has terminated in Ultra-Sectarianism. Both countries set up individual or private human judgment as the great standard of authority.

M. de Tocqueville points out and proclaims the rapid march of France towards democracy; and he deplores it, owing to the unfit state of the various classes of the nation. "The book we submit to the reader," he says, "has been written under the influence of a certain religious terror, produced in the soul of the author by the aspect of this irresistible revolution advancing for so many centuries through all obstacles, and which we still see in our time advancing amidst the ruins that are its work." The author afterwards expresses his noble and sorrowful emotions, when he dwells on the divorce of religion and liberty in France. "In what era—in what state are we?" he asks. "The pious oppose liberty, and the friends of liberty attack religion; the most generous hearts are the apologists of slavery, and low, servile dispositions bestow their praise on liberty; we see honest and enlightened citizens opposing every progress, while others, without patriotism, without morality, are the apostles of civilization and of knowledge. Is our age the image of all those that have preceded? Has man always had under his eyes, as in our time, a world without any social link, in which virtue is without genius and genius without honor; in which the love for order and peace is confounded with a proneness to tyranny, and the sacred respect for liberty with a contempt for the laws; in which conscience casts but a feeble light over human actions, and where nothing seems either forbidden or permitted, honest or criminal, true or false?"

The above picture may be deemed tainted with a certain exaggeration not in harmony with the usual calm appreciation of the author; but it is probably the sole instance of such deviation, affording the only reproach to which the work is amenable, whilst the description itself may even be considered by many as only too faithful. Notwithstanding the gloomy colors in which M. de Tocqueville depicts the existing race of men and the morality of France, he nevertheless does not despair of her future

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destinies; although, marking all the dangers that await her, he seems to believe that a felicitous democratic organization may be the final result of the past convulsions and the present state of society.

In the course of his work, M. de Tocqueville discusses, in an admirable manner, the effects of three characteristics of the American system, which have exercised the greatest influence on the people of the United States, namely, universal instruction, independent municipal government, and the abolition of the law of primogeniture. It is evident that to these peculiarities, affecting the culture of the understanding, the direction of human activity, the disposal of property, and, therefore, the three great elements of society, knowledge, authority, and property, the whole social system of the Americans must be referred. Democracy is protected and maintained by their influence; but the doubtful question is, whether, whilst they act as such powerful stimulants to the exercise of popular authority, they will furnish the necessary check to popular license, whether they will allow the work of human improvement to advance, unthwarted by revolutionary error and turbulence. M. de Tocqueville points out the connection existing between the laws and manners of a country, and the nature of their reciprocal influence, by which the laws which tend to render the manners of a people more democratic, do in fact tend to prepare the way for other and more democratic laws. They undermine the ground on which they rest, and their extension becomes indefinite. "The most advantageous situation, and the best possible laws," says M. de Tocqueville, "cannot maintain a constitution in spite of the manners of a country." It is therefore of paramount importance that the institutions of a country should be so directed, and the legislative power so applied, as to maintain the principles of public order and public justice in the manners of the people.

Whilst, therefore, the means of education in America are great and accessible, the purpose of instruction has ever been conformable to the republican condition of society. In the United States, politics are the end and aim of education. The constant exercise of political rights, the habitual discussions of political topics, imperatively demand the application of that modicum of information with which the American citizen is furnished. The ordinary reading of the mass of the nation is unhappily confined to the worst newspaper-press that ever existed; for the native literature of America (on which many excellent reflections are to be found in the second part of M. de Tocqueville's work, which will

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afterwards fall under attention) is well known to be in a very defective state. But the imperfections of the system of mental education and culture in America, are compensated by the habitual discharge of functions which doubtless tend to invigorate the good sense of the people.

M. de Tocqueville exposes the tendencies of the education given to the American nation, with great precision. He observes, that a just opinion on the state of instruction among the Americans, can only be formed by considering the subject from two different points of view. If the inquirer singles out the learned, he will be astonished to find how rare they are; but if he counts the ignorant, the American population will appear to be the most enlightened community in the world. On general subjects connected with Europe, an American will express those crude and vague notions which are so common to the ignorant all over the world; but on subjects connected with the government of his own country, his language will become as clear and precise as his thoughts. In all M. de Tocqueville says on this topic, there is a salutary lesson conveyed as to the defects of an exclusive education. Thus, as in Germany, the purpose of education is the formation of characters fitted for the duties of private life, so in America the aim and intent of instruction is the formation of citizens possessing those qualities which fit them to play a part, subordinate or prominent, in the perpetual strife of parties. Now, what is earnestly to be desired and purposed in Europe, is an education equally adapted to perfect the moral, the domestic, and the intellectual man—not designed merely as a training for political struggles, which stimulate the activity without enlarging the heart.

Dangerous consequences, doubtless, may result from a system in which a little knowledge is swelled into importance, by being joined to an incommensurate degree of power. Yet, on the other hand, it is obvious that nothing conduces so essentially as this practical political information to the order and stability of those municipal institutions which are the basis of the American constitutions. In New England, more especially, the local system of government has received the sanction of time; it is there most fully secured by the laws, and best exercised by the people. M. de Tocqueville gives an accurate analysis of these institutions; he shows how they have become the surest safeguards of American freedom. It is with great truth that he compares the divisions of townships, municipalities, and counties, to concealed breakwaters which check or divide the current of popu-

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lar excitement. He admits that society in America is subject to all those evil passions, delusions, and perversities, which originate in the frailty of human nature; but, among the great and successful efforts which the Americans have made to counteract such imperfections, and to correct the natural defects of democracy, he places their municipal laws in the foremost rank, as tending to restrain the ambition of citizens within a narrow sphere, and to check the passions which might have worked havoc in the State or Union, by limiting their action to individual boroughs or parishes.

He afterwards adverts to the larger divisions of the American republic—the counties, the states, and the union at large; and then proceeds to show, with regard to the boroughs, how the system of local independence operates as a powerful instrument of social organization—as a principle of cohesion in the community; how the defects of democracy in the government are abundantly remedied by the operation of the democratic principle on a small scale, and within the limits of a small community. Even in America, therefore, where democracy has obtained its most complete development, it is under the control of a superior force, which limits its sway and checks its excesses. The borough is the free subject of the state, and in that position its activity can only be directed to such ends as conduce to the good of the nation. A social relation exists between the boroughs, municipal bodies, counties, and states; and the authority exercised over the lesser divisions of the country in national affairs partakes of the monarchical. Nevertheless, the nation has no superior power to control its action, and the errors of a national majority are irremediable. The actual sovereignty of the people in America, the absolute equality which exists in society, reposes on a maxim universally received in that country, namely (as M. de Tocqueville expresses it)—"That every one is the best and sole judge of his own private interest. Every individual possesses an equal share of power, and participates alike in the government of the state; every individual is therefore supposed to be as well-informed, as virtuous, and as capable as any of his fellow-citizens."

The author of *Democracy in America* subsequently portrays the egotistical characteristics of the American—his selfishness as regards his own interest and indulgence, his self-esteem, and other odious qualities engendered under such a system; he explains how these tendencies are apt to swell into an overweening vanity when flattered, to sink into a petulant, unforgiving moroseness when thwarted, and to breed the worst feelings of envy

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and malice when crossed, as they perpetually must be. Under their pernicious influence, the patience of humility, the cheerful confidence between men, all the softening ties of mutual reliance, are supplanted by the spirit of strife and rivalry, stubbornness, scorn, and hatred. The social principle springing from charity, from high and humane motives, is blasted by the frigid calculations of expediency; and society becomes a mere association for utilitarian purposes, for the acquisition of wealth, for the enjoyment of luxuries, and for the gratification of individual importance. Such a condition of things is thus powerfully described in M. de Tocqueville's introduction:—"Whilst the division of property has lessened the distance which separated the rich from the poor, it would seem that the nearer they draw to one another, the greater is their mutual hatred, and the more vehement the envy and the dread with which they resist each other's claims to power. The notion of right is alike unknown to both classes, and force affords to both the only argument for the present, and the only guarantee for the future."

It cannot be doubted that the law of succession, as established in France and America, is one of the most powerful causes of the equality of conditions in these countries; but M. de Tocqueville, in the first part of his work, fails to point out the distinction between the obligatory distribution of property among children and relatives enforced in France, and the free power of testamentary disposition allowed in America; it is only in the second part, published some years after the first, that he dwells on this material difference, exhibiting a law at variance with the principles of American democracy, and one strongly indicative of the civil equality existing in France. He also marks, at the same time, another anti-democratic privilege in America—that of being able to give bail—a faculty which so exclusively belongs to the rich, while the poor are at once consigned to prison.

The material spirit which animates the citizen of the United States is afterwards analyzed. To an American, the intimate connection between family distinction and national renown is practically unknown; that feeling, that amiable delusion, which preserves the lineal descent of a name, given by a nation's gratitude, and identified with a nation's fame, is to him an object of contempt. The wealthiest town of the union, presents the most singular vicissitudes of fortune; riches are dispersed as rapidly as they are acquired, and all the families that composed the federalist party have already disappeared. Their descendants have sunk to the broad level of democracy, and are unknown in the

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mass of their fellow-citizens. Such perpetual fluctuations in the tenure of property, announce revolutions as certain and as perpetual in the political institutions of the country, until, to use the powerful expression of the author, "the bulwarks of the influence of wealth are ground down to the fine and shifting sand which is the basis of democracy."

Vestiges of aristocracy may, however, be detected in the union, evinced here and there in secret discontent and exclusive affectation, in luxurious living, and superior pretensions; but they are carefully concealed from the public eye; and thus is hypocrisy necessarily engendered.

M. de Tocqueville shows how the principle of *delegation* has already in a great measure supplanted that of *representation* in America. In more than one instance, the majority, not satisfied with the established means of enforcing its opinions, has formed popular conventions for the purpose of coercing and dictating to the constituted powers of the country. The instability of the laws, which is the greatest blemish in the character of the American government, has reached an extent he would have scarcely deemed compatible with the safety of a nation. The dangers which M. de Tocqueville predicts as threatening the public peace, are daily becoming more apparent. But, amidst such grievous defects, with a fever of political excitement ever raging among the people, on what grounds it will be asked, does M. de Tocqueville avow his belief in the durability and prosperity of the United States?

In the first instance, on the physical advantages of the country. No dread need be entertained of outrages from the cravings of human desires, where all desires may find easy and legitimate satisfaction; the liberties that might provoke confusion on a smaller or more occupied field, only tend to promote the rapid cultivation and improvement of the American continent. The union, moreover, is not endangered by the probability of foreign invasion; and, wholly unencumbered by traditions, her internal evils are not so inveterate but that they may be checked and repaired. Another guarantee for the maintenance of democracy in America, may be found in what we have already termed the manners or republican experience of the people. It is very difficult to imagine the occurrence of an organic change which would revive the claims of aristocracy, after the existence of republican institutions founded on the repudiation of all personal privileges and distinctions. On the other hand, the spirit and ideas universal amongst the Americans, warrant the hope that

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they will never sink into a base equality of subjection to a single despot. It is therefore probable, according to M. de Tocqueville, that democratic institutions will continue to subsist in the United States, and that, with all their endless mutations, they will not be subverted either by an aristocratic or a monarchical form of government.

And we may be allowed emphatically to repeat, that the principal source and security of American freedom does not lie so much in the popular election of a president, of governors of states, of the members of senates and houses of representatives, forming the Congress or state legislatures, or in the administration of nearly all the business of society by the people themselves, as in those characteristic manners which keep up the habit of attending to the public interest, not only in great affairs, or on a few momentary occasions, but in matters of dry and troublesome detail. Thus it is that the people are enlightened, and taught by experience how public affairs should be conducted.

Nothing can be more instructive and interesting than the account given by M. de Tocqueville of the federal constitution, which still remains as a monument of the wisdom of the federalist party, and of the principles on which the relations between the union and the states were determined. He shows how a supreme judicial power was constituted so as to be, in point of law, the most important tie of that confederation, which is held together, in point of fact, by a community of interests. Many circumstances contribute to render the government of each individual state more energetic than that of the union. The affections, the interests, the hopes, and the pride of the citizens, are more immediately appealed to in the government of their own state, which is nearer and dearer to them than the remote nation to which they belong. In their local assemblies, there is more to gratify their propensities and their prejudices. We therefore cannot be surprised to find, that M. de Tocqueville regards the federal government as a form which requires the free consent of the governed to enable it to subsist, and that he confidently predicts its defeat, whenever it may engage in a struggle with the sovereignty of the states.

The question that naturally follows is, whether the states will choose to remain united. The Americans have no dread of mutual invasion, or any need of prohibitive boundaries: their immense tracts of country daily extending, are united by the interchange of the productions of the soil; commerce and manufactures are widely diffused; and every item of the federal budget

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is designed for the maintenance of material interests which are common to all the confederated states. M. de Tocqueville adds other reasons to these, derived from the similarity of the political and social principles which prevail in the union. It cannot be supposed, however, that all the incidents of national existence, the strivings for preponderance, the inequalities of the states in wealth, civilization, knowledge, and population, will allow the union to remain unimpaired. The common interests of the nation may be unable to counteract these difficulties and dangers, which the political authority of Congress, and the judicial authority of the Supreme Court of the United States, will be equally unable to obviate.

Whilst the author amply demonstrates the inherent weakness of judicial power in political affairs, the judicial institutions of the United States unquestionably deserve the minute attention which he has devoted to them. The members of the legal profession exercise a strong anti-democratic, if not aristocratic influence, in a social point of view. In a political point of view, the courts of the United States are invested with a degree of authority they are far from possessing in any other country. The courts of justice are powerful instruments in the hands of the lawyers to control the democracy. The American judge is armed with the extraordinary power of declaring a law to be unconstitutional, and of annulling any enactment, on the ground of its being opposed to the spirit of the fundamental law of the union. It is true, indeed, that this action of the judicial censorship is restricted and solely applicable to the particular cases which are brought before the courts of law; but it is, nevertheless, sure and permanent, securing to the only authority which is, comparatively speaking, independent of the people, a salutary control over the injustice or precipitancy of popular assemblies. It must, however, be added, that the judicial functionaries are not independent of popular election in some of the states; and in most of them innovations have been made, which threaten to paralyze the influence of the legal tribunals. On every point of the American constitutions, the democratic principle is at work, beating, like an angry sea, against the dams which restrain its encroachments.

We have not yet touched upon an interesting, harrowing portion of M. de Tocqueville's book, wherein he speaks of that horrible leprosy of the federacy—of slavery—that awful lie given to all notions and maxims of equality. Nearly four millions of our fellow-creatures, although made of flesh and blood like ourselves,

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are the property of others who call themselves free; but, in truth, their freedom is spurious and polluted, like that of the ancients —a suspicious, ruthless, and oppressive tyranny over an enthralled and unhappy class, doomed to unmerited degradation and misfortune, attended naturally by those unsocial feelings of *caste* which divide by an impassible barrier members of one community, and provoke that mutual antipathy and abhorrence never to be assuaged until the mortal struggle is passed which impends in gloomy perspective, and in which one of the two races must infallibly be exterminated. M. de Beaumont, as we have previously intimated, has related in his *Marie* many affecting and truthful incidents illustrative of the evil; but M. de Tocqueville exposes the sin and error of slavery in that emphatic and elevated strain in which virtuous indignation is most aptly vented. No friend of humanity has ever wielded his pen in deprecating the enormity with more earnest and decisive feeling, or with equal profundity and equanimity of judgment. He portrays the anxiety and insecurity brooding over society thus immorally constituted; he discusses the causes, chances, and results, of the bloody tragedy hereafter to be enacted. We learn from him that the owners and trainers of slaves strive to darken their minds as much as possible, and to reduce them in all respects to the level of brutes, hoping thereby to avert the day of retribution and vengeance; and thus, amidst incessant apprehensions, odious cruelties, and efforts to brutalize human beings, the progress of improvement, the amelioration of institutions, the growth of morality and religion, are checked and blighted. Who can say but the time will come when the blacks, aided, perchance, in their desperate struggle, shall crush the liberty and independence of the whites? All enlightened men in America regard them with infinite solicitude; and even the legislature itself, the congress at Washington, seems at times to start, as if it heard the distant crash of broken chains.

With the pictures of good and evil exhibited to us by M. de Tocqueville, resplendent with the rich fruits of democracy on the one hand, sombre and dismal with threatening shadows on the other, what conclusions are we to draw as to the present state of American democracy? Are we to admit with the author that the spread of equality is a necessary event, willed by Providence and sanctioned by time; believe with him that democratic institutions may yet be invented to serve as a broad and solid basis for the government of human societies; and acknowledge that, "although the Americans have not resolved the problem,

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they furnish useful data to those who undertake the task?" Or, are we to regard the changes that the world is undergoing at the present day, as some great and mysterious transition, which will furnish the means of attaining some remote good, still undiscernible to ourselves and our generation?

With regard to the future destiny of America, M. de Tocqueville concludes that the elements and chances of security far exceed those of destruction; and in the inductive parallel he draws between Europe and America, he indulges in the prophetic vein with the boldness and sagacity so characteristic of his work. His views on this most interesting topic of speculation are calculated to arrest the attention of reflecting readers: we content ourselves with citing the last lines of the first part of *Democracy in America*:—

"Two great nations are seen on the globe in our time; both, having started from a different point, seem to advance towards the same end; they are the Russians and the Anglo-Americans.

Both have grown in obscurity, and, whilst the attention of mankind was fixed elsewhere, they have suddenly placed themselves in the first rank of nations. The world has learned almost at the same time their birth and their grandeur.

All other nations seem to have reached the boundary marked by nature, but these are still growing; all the others have ceased to march, or are advancing through a thousand obstacles; these alone advance with rapid and easy strides, in a career the limits of which cannot yet be perceived.

The mainspring of action of the one is liberty; servitude is that of the other.

Their points of departure differ widely; the path of each follows a very different course. Nevertheless, each seems called by a secret decree of Providence to hold some day in her hands the destinies of half the world."

It is needless for us to enforce the importance of such forebodings to the civilized world, or to recommend the nations of Europe to ponder thereon. Upon the appearance, in the year 1835, of M. de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, it was greeted with an applause and admiration that, instead of subsiding, augments with time: the work has become a standard authority in every political discussion and investigation; it has received from the British public unequivocal testimonies of approbation, honorable alike to both parties, forming in this respect a striking exception to the indifference with which the higher productions of intellect on the continent are viewed in the United Kingdom.

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Previous to the publication of the book, M. de Tocqueville was comparatively unknown; thereafter he quickly acquired a dazzling celebrity. The *Académie Française* conferred on him the great prize annually awarded to the author of the work judged to excel in the features of morality and utility. The doors of the Royal Institute and of the Chamber of Deputies were immediately thrown open to the man who had shed such a flood of light on topics that agitated all contemplative minds, who had impressed on France the lesson that the American democracy would be but a frightful chaos without religion, hushed the vain terrors evoked at the bare mention of "popular sovereignty," and prepared so vast an amount of useful information and political wisdom for behoof of the obtuse and bigoted, whose numbers are unhappily so large throughout the communities of Europe.

All that has been hitherto said of M. de Tocqueville's work refers to the first part, published in 1835; the two concluding volumes appeared five years afterwards, in the summer of 1840, forming the complement and consummation of the whole. These are devoted to the results of democracy, and thus are chiefly reflective; indeed, the learned author very clearly indicates in his preface the precise object of each part of the work:—

"The Americans," he says, "live in a democratic state of society, which has naturally suggested to them certain laws and a certain political character. This same state of society has, moreover, engendered amongst them a multitude of feelings and opinions unknown amongst the older aristocratic communities of Europe; it has destroyed or modified all the relations which before existed, and established others of a novel kind. The aspect of civil society has been no less affected by these changes than that of the political world. The former subject has been treated in the Democracy of America, which I published five years ago; to examine the latter is the object of the present book."

Having thus clearly stated the object of the second part of his *Democracy in America*, M. de Tocqueville proceeds to discuss the influence of democracy on opinions, on literature, on the feelings, on manners, and society politically considered; all which investigations he conducts with his accustomed talent, whilst, in the constant reference he makes, in the course of his inquiries, to European prejudices and habits, he displays infinite tact and delicacy. Although, in his dissertations on the political state of America, and on the tendencies of Europe, in the former part of his work, M. de Tocqueville often alludes to the transformation which the whole political and social condition of humanity

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is undergoing, yet, in the second part, he grapples more firmly with this topic. During the years which elapsed between the publications, his convictions seem to have become more firmly fixed, and to have reached a greater degree of maturity; he asserts more unreservedly that the old social system of the world is worn out and ready to perish—a persuasion, indeed, that pervades the whole work, although always expressed in a calm and dispassionate tone. He thus honestly reveals the spirit of his work at the commencement of the second part:—

"Some readers may, perhaps, be astonished that, firmly persuaded as I am that the democratic revolution which we are witnessing is an irresistible fact, against which it would be neither desirable nor wise to struggle, I should often have occasion, in this book, to address language of such severity to those democratic communities which this revolution has brought into being. My answer is simply, that it is because I am not an adversary of democracy, that I have sought to speak of democracy in all sincerity. Men will not accept truth at the hands of their enemies, and truth is seldom offered to them by their friends; for this reason I have spoken it. I was convinced that many would take upon themselves to announce the new blessings which the principle of equality promises to mankind, but that few would point out from afar the dangers with which it threatens them. To those perils, therefore, I have turned my attention; and, believing that I have discovered them clearly, I have not had the cowardice to leave them untold."

And all these truths are portrayed by M. de Tocqueville with admirable penetration and clearness: they often present but a gloomy perspective to France and Europe; for, although America is the object of the author's investigations, he constantly refers the results of democracy to Europe, especially to France, making due allowances for differences in civilization, circumstances, and bias; although, it must be confessed, he is at times too rigorous, too narrow in his conclusions, when drawing parallels between America and Europe, or between Carolina or Virginia and France. America is under the author's eyes, but France is constantly in his thoughts; he often names her, and she is always understood. This is one of the great objections which have been raised by English critics (*Tait's Magazine*, September, 1840) against M. de Tocqueville, and it is but an idle reproach: in our opinion, the feature assailed constitutes his greatest merit; for, independently of the laudable intention of dedicating his labors to the advantage of his country, those demo-

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cratic tendencies of Europe, so clearly demonstrated by M. de Tocqueville, are principally working in France. France is indisputably the vanguard of democracy in Europe; and to that nation, therefore, which may serve as a type, his exhortations are naturally addressed; and he had a right to expect, from the sagacity of his readers, that any apparent discrepancies in his views and deductions should be attributed to the different considerations and influences to be weighed when speaking of distinct communities.

On equally erroneous grounds it has likewise been objected by other English critics (*Blackwood*, October, 1840), that M. de Tocqueville's predictions touching future equality and the progress of democratic ideas, are not applicable to England, which, we think, may be denied. With certain modifications, contingent on peculiar causes, we contend that they are as applicable as to other countries, despite the predominance, in English institutions and society, of the aristocratic element, which, we are ready to avow, has tended to exalt the political greatness of the British empire. Again, he is reproached for being too anticipative; but surely none can venture seriously to maintain that he is so with respect to France. Moreover, it is alleged in disparagement, that his idea on the progress of industry and commerce being centralizing is contradicted by the state of England, the first commercial country in Europe, and highly *decentralized;* but it should have been remembered that M. de Tocqueville had said elsewhere that Protestantism was decentralizing, and that the spirit of centralization is more applicable to Roman Catholic countries than to Protestant ones. Religion and commerce may therefore counterbalance each other; and the author alludes chiefly to futurity. It may be inferred from these remarks, that the multitude of questions handled by the author, give to his work an apparent confusion and uncertainty quite in accordance with the inherent character of his theme. And it is especially in this that he has shown himself a conscientious reasoner; for his strong sense and perception of truth wrestles perpetually with the proposition he would establish, and the points he labors to prove seem often doubtful in the examination of another feature, a few pages further. The work requires, therefore, something more than the mere perusal, which has been so often recommended; it requires to be read and studied with earnest attention.

An instance of the contradictions into which M. de Tocqueville has been occasionally betrayed, we have seen triumphantly

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cited as peculiarly flagrant; and in order that the necessity of attention in the perusal of the work, and of appreciation in the consideration of its separate parts, may be more fully understood, we will here adduce it. He says, speaking of the influence of democracy on the intelligence—"In most of the operations of the mind, each American appeals to the individual impulse of his own understanding alone." And then subsequently—"In the United States, the majority undertakes to supply a multitude of ready-made opinions for the use of individuals, who are thus relieved from the necessity of forming opinions of their own. Everybody there adopts a great number of theories on philosophy, morals, and politics, without inquiry, upon public trust."

These apparently contradictory data are not so in reality, and all those who are acquainted with America will acknowledge their truth: the first refers to political ideas, to the operations of the mind with respect to government and politics, while the latter is delivered with respect to literary and scientific ideas. It would be superfluous to pursue the task of explanation as to other reproaches of a similar nature that have been addressed to the second part of M. de Tocqueville's work, especially in England; we are disposed to attribute these unsuccessful efforts of criticism to the hatred engendered in certain minds by the fearful democratic revelations of the author, and by the severe but never acceptable admonitions, however lofty and just, which he indirectly addresses to the rich and the powerful.

We will now revert to the perspective which M. de Tocqueville etches, in somewhat gloomy colors, for the nations of Europe, grounded on an analogous and inductive estimate of the influence of democracy on feelings and society. We have stated that the second part of his work is devoted to the results of democracy, and, we might have added, to the results of democracy in the private relations of life. Such is the vast theme proposed for elucidation, far surpassing in compass what the title-page would seem to indicate. How arduous a task to trace the influence of democracy on the heart, on inclinations, on tastes, manners, ideas, sentiments, nay, on the very deportment of men in the circles of society! And in the conclusions of this inquiry, every Frenchman must take a peculiarly deep interest, since he is well aware that they directly bear on the fate and destinies of his own country, from a similarity of characteristics and tendencies. But when we come to enter upon the subject, to follow the author through his manifold deductions, we are struck with concern and melancholy to find that the effects of democratic in-

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fluence are of a certain deadening or assimilating character. Thus, in democratic countries, we are led to expect that excellence will wholly disappear from literature, arts, and science; men of extensive learning and knowledge will be no longer found, but, in lieu, general and superficial information will be universally diffused; the race of philosophers will become extinct, but practical ideas and common sense will flourish; great artists likewise will be wanting, but a superfluity of mediocre performances will inundate the land; works of originality and genius will be sought in vain, but literature of a lower standard will be superabundant; the drama will lose its lofty character, and become the vehicle simply of commonplace delineations; superiority of workmanship even will cease, the skill of artisans become equalised, and the wants of society be supplied with cheap and inferior commodities.

The results of democratic influence, as demonstrated and developed by M. de Tocqueville, will moreover tend to loosen and lessen the ties between individuals, but to strengthen and enlarge those between man and mankind; there may be less chivalrous feeling and high refinement, but there will be more general civility and decorum; the principle of utility and interest will replace the principle of duty and sacrifice; the relations of dependence between superior and inferior will give way to those based on contracts for mutual advantage; reliance on a special Providence will be superseded by a conviction of the universality of the Divine government. In politics there will be no prepollent individuals, but combinations of individuals, who, taken severally, would be impotent; no high-vaulting ambition, but universal emulation; no master of the world, but a general obedience to the public will, however tyrannically enforced; no large estates or fortunes, but a more equal distribution of property. Society thus reduced to fractional elements, depressed on the one hand and elevated on the other, will merge into an uniform and monotonous agglomeration.

Such are the effects of democratic influence, as delineated by M. de Tocqueville, the United States being always the type—the reader being left, as we have said, to make the necessary allowances for the shades of difference that would exist in other countries. Such are, on the whole, the consequences of that democratic influence now progressive in Europe; for it must be remembered that M. de Tocqueville's democracy does not mean a republican form of government only, but equality, and democratic institutions can exist under a monarchy in which the peo-

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ple are all equal and subjected to one common master, who selects indiscriminately from all of them the instruments of his government: and can it be denied that a love for equality is universally gaining ground? Among the high political features of this last part of the work, equality and liberty are very finely discriminated from each other. We believe that hitherto the two things had often been confounded, and, indeed, continue to be so in popular apprehension. After having established the difference existing between them, the author proceeds to say—"I think that democratic communities have a natural taste for freedom: left to themselves, they will seek it, cherish it, and view any privation of it with regret. But for equality their passion is ardent, insatiable, incessant, invincible; they all struggle for equality in freedom; and if they cannot obtain that, they will struggle for equality in slavery. They will endure poverty, servitude, barbarism; but they will not endure aristocracy."

This observation may be said to refer principally to France; but it seems to us that such purely political speculations would have found a more appropriate place in the first part of the work, which is exclusively political. It is probable, however, that they were the fruits of the author's later meditations, and, as tending to evince the extent and profundity of his investigations, it is of little moment in what part of the work they appear.

We have followed M. de Tocqueville in his darker picture of the effects of democratic equality; but he likewise from time to time presents to us the fairer side of the subject. He holds that democratic governments are more humane; that no sympathy exists between those that are not alike; that an aristocracy, therefore, has no sympathy for the lower class; and that although, as he explained it before, democracy engenders selfishness, yet it engenders also a sense of the propriety and duty of rendering mutual assistance and succor. He notes, moreover, the pure patriotism, order, harmony, and public happiness, that must infallibly attend a democracy.

The paramount feature of the four volumes on *Democracy in America*, is a constant parallel between the effects of aristocracy and democracy. There is no doubt that a few subordinate consequences or minor characteristics attributed to each may be objected to: criticism has exerted all its vigilance to detect them; and yet how insignificant is the array! The *Edinburgh Review* (October, 1840), in a very judicious article on M. de Tocqueville, thinks, for instance, that the results exclusively assigned by him to democracy may proceed, not from democracy alone,

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but also from civilization—an objection easily refuted; for, had the highly polished and civilized France of Louis XIV. any proneness to democracy? It likewise points to Lower Canada, which, though highly democratic, has none of the characteristics M. de Tocqueville attributes to democracy. But can a country in colonial subjection be admitted to the democratical rank contemplated by the author? We can find nothing in his work to justify such an assimilation; and assuredly the absence of those characteristics in the province of Lower Canada cannot affect the palpable truth of M. de Tocqueville's prophetic glances on Europe.

We have found also a rational article on the second part of M. de Tocqueville's *Democracy*, in the *British and Foreign Quarterly Review*, wherein it is contended that the tendency he attributes to democracy for generalizations, for sweeping, general ideas, and for Pantheistical opinions, is inadmissible; an exception previously taken by M. Villemain, in a superficial article inserted in the *Journal des Savants* (May 1840). But the English reviewer enters into an elaborate dissertation on the subject, observing that, if the above tendencies are democratic, the Germans must be the most democratic people under the sun, and Hegel the greatest democrat in Germany; and that such Pantheistic and generalizing ideas cannot be said to exist in England or the United States. This objection may be easily repelled. M. de Tocqueville alludes more especially to the intellectual condition of France; and admitting that Germany was not democratically inclined, while she certainly is so, this does not prevent those tendencies from prevailing in the French democracy, and in those countries where society and political institutions are in a constant state of oscillation, and not so firm and steadfast as in England and America. Might it not, nevertheless, be proved that Pantheism is not so very foreign to America? Does it so widely differ from that Socinianism which is so progressive in the United States?

But to return to the great feature of M. de Tocqueville's work, the parallel between aristocracy and democracy. While he inculcates upon us the growing progress of the latter, the comparison he draws between the two forms of government—between the effects, advantages, and evils appropriate to each—creates in our minds a feeling of intense anxiety for his ultimate preference; we expect a tranquilizing solution at the close, a decisive summing up. But we are disappointed. In consequence, although M. de Tocqueville lays down noble principles upon the politics

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of the age, and of all civilized countries—although the lofty philosophical character of his ideas, his resolute hostility to everything which may encourage or sanction degraded notions of man, of his spiritual nature, of his social interest, of his eternal destinies, never disappears—this uncertainty, this absence of conclusion, balking the reader's impatience, leaves him in gloom and doubt. After having earnestly studied the work, pondered on its positions, and weighed both questions, he asks of himself in puzzled agitation, which form of government is the best of the two? which is the most honorable to humanity? which is the most favorable to the development of the heart—of the intellect—of morality—of a deep love for all that is noble and beautiful? Futile, unnecessary questions in the eye of M. de Tocqueville: he proves to you that the days of aristocracy are gone by; that the popular torrent, which advances with fury, cannot be checked, but must be properly directed, if a destructive deluge would be averted; and he holds that this is the sole fitting subject of solicitude. To his salutary exhortations in this respect, he hopes to draw the attention of the French legislature. If he succeed in this object, he will deserve the eternal gratitude of his country. His views are at once political, religious, and moral, addressed at a most propitious time, when it is essential that a wise and beneficial direction be given to the aspiring democratical spirit predominant in France. He has anatomized the political tendencies of France, and pointed out the obstacles which may encumber their regular flow, as well as the excesses that may be dreaded from them. Thus his work possesses a high practical value, and as such has been estimated and consulted by the leading men of the country; it has operated powerfully in giving to French democracy the concentrated energy, the regular character, the aversion to outrage, and the steady determinate progress, which we have more than once remarked as characteristic of the political tendencies of France in the nineteenth century.

But, after all—after having long meditated on the book of M. de Tocqueville—we are tempted to ask ourselves, Can this be democracy? What will it profit us, if we obtain, with our tears and our blood, the abolition of privileges, the equality of rights? Must we level all intellects and feelings? Must we debase the human heart? Is aristocracy, with its grandeur and flagrant impositions, preferable or not to this sordid commercial rivalry? When all is mean in the multitude, can the nation be great? Can heroism exist after the formation of so many petty interests and petty sentiments? Can the mass really differ so much from

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individuals? M. de Tocqueville would teach us to give an unfavorable answer to all such questions. He traces the decline of all that is most worthy and noble in the world; nor does he pause till he has described a condition more degraded, more servile, more unworthy of man, than what prevailed in the worst times of ancient despotism—a condition which he shows to be naturally superinduced by the vices, and even by some of the virtues, of democratic countries, but which he believes may be warded off by strenuous efforts, by wise education, and by a judicious use of free institutions. How great, then, are the dangers of democracy! And how repulsive, too, is the picture he draws of the rich, who dare not openly enjoy their honorably acquired wealth—of the intellectual, who are condemned to conceal their superiority, lest the suffrages of the ignorant and jealous should be denied them—of the odious control exercised by a gross prejudiced majority over men's thoughts and tastes! This is truly a state of moral slavery, the worst, we think, of all servitudes; and so gloomy a description of possible results adds greatly to the painful impression produced by that uncertainty and doubt in which, as we mentioned, M. de Tocqueville leaves the subject. We feel as if all dignified sentiments, generous impulses, genius, wit, and cheerfulness, were destined to vanish from France.

And is it possible that such is to be the futurity of France—of the France of the Crusades, of Louis XIV. and of Napoleon—of the country upon which the eyes of the world are now fixed—of the country whose code of laws, historical labors, scientific attainments, are the admiration of all intellectual beings? We fervently hope not. We hope that, with the counteracting influences allowed by M. de Tocqueville to be deducible from the spirit and genius of his country, very different consequences will ensue; we hope that the physiognomy of French democracy will differ still more from that of the United States than he seems to infer that it will, and, despite of all drawbacks be invested with a higher character of benevolence, toleration, and refinement. But this is the mere indulgence of a fond hope; and, no doubt, when we return to the work, our perplexity will assail us anew. We must be content, therefore, to remain in solicitude touching the unknown future: and we close our remarks on M. de Tocqueville with the quotation of his concluding paragraph, which is eminently characteristic of the whole work.

"For myself, who now look back from this extreme limit of my task, and discover from afar, but at once, the various sub-

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jects that have occupied my attentive consideration upon the way, I am full of apprehensions and of hopes. I perceive mighty dangers which it is possible to avert, mighty evils which may be avoided or alleviated; and I cling with a firmer hold to the conviction, that for democratic nations to be virtuous and prosperous they require but to will it.

"I am aware that many of my contemporaries maintain that nations are never their own masters here below, and that they necessarily obey some invincible and unintelligent influence, arising from anterior events, from their distinctive race, or from the soil and climate of their country. Such principles are false and cowardly; such principles can never produce aught but feeble men and pusillanimous nations. Providence has not created mankind entirely independent or entirely free. It is true, that around every man a fatal circle is traced, beyond which he cannot pass; but within the wide verge of that circle he is powerful and free: as it is with man, so it is with communities. The nations of our time cannot prevent the conditions of men from becoming equal; but it depends upon themselves whether the principle of equality is to lead them to servitude or freedom, to knowledge or barbarism, to prosperity or wretchedness."

Our exposition of the political tendencies of France would remain yet more imperfect than our narrow limits necessarily render it, were we to omit a brief sketch of the leading political characters, and of their eloquence, in the nineteenth century. Political oratory in a constitutional country is at once the political expression of the nation and the great spring of all movements. We shall confine ourselves to that order of eloquence; and indeed, with the exception of the military oratory of Napoleon, political oratory includes all the oratory of France; for those who are distinguished at the bar, like MM. Berryer and Odilon Barrot, or in the professional chair, like MM. Royer-Collard and Guizot, are soon called to exercise their powers of language and mind for the benefit of their country in parliamentary functions. The eloquence of the pulpit is now, we may say, completely null; the French excelled in it formerly, because the church was, in truth, the only field then open to oratorical talents, and the Catholic religion, more imaginative than the Protestant, allows greater scope to imagery and pathos, while the latter adheres more strictly to the sternness of argument and reason.

With reference to what we call the military eloquence of Na-

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poleon, it remains indisputably a transcendent proof of his universal genius. We are disposed to believe that the extraordinary influence of his proclamations on the armies he commanded, has not been sufficiently noticed and delineated by his biographers. There are numerous instances of generals stimulating their troops to victory by the use of a few electrifying words: we have the Caledonian chief, in Tacitus, concluding his stirring harangue with the magnificent peroration, "Proinde, ituri in aciem, et majores vestros et posteros cogitate" (therefore, when advancing to battle, think both of your ancestors and of your posterity); we have Henry IV. at Ivry telling his men that they had only to follow his white plume, for it would always be seen on the path of honor and glory; we have the great Condé reminding his army of their former victories; Nelson, with his immortal words at Trafalgar, and others. In these examples we recognize the force of genius in transient but soul-inspiring ebullitions; and even in this respect, also, many of the single phrases of Napoleon are renowned: thus, when on the morning of the battle of the Moscowa, he exclaimed, pointing to the glorious orb as it rose from the horizon, "Behold the sun of Austerlitz!" and when, at the battle of the Pyramids, he used the memorable expression so much admired by Lord Byron—"Forty centuries look upon you from those majestic summits!"

But with Napoleon his addresses and proclamations form a course of military eloquence, as the study of his campaigns teaches the science of war. The same spirit is perceptible in his proclamations as in his manœuvres; he inspires his army with the like enthusiasm and ardor. A splendid example of his animated style is to be found in his celebrated address to the army of Italy, a fortnight after the commencement of the campaign.*

* Though the morose critic may censure, we trust the considerate reader will approve the insertion of the proclamation alluded to in the text:—

"Soldiers!—In fifteen days you have gained six victories, taken twenty-one standards, fifty-five pieces of cannon, several fortified places, and conquered the richest part of Piedmont. You have made fifteen thousand prisoners, slain or wounded more than ten thousand men.

You had hitherto contended for sterile rocks, illustrated by your courage, but useless to the country; you now rival by your achievements the armies of Holland and the Rhine. Devoid of all aids, you have shown how to dispense with them. You have won battles without artillery, you have passed rivers without bridges, made forced marches without shoes, bivouacked without brandy and often without bread. Republican phalanxes, the soldiers of liberty, were alone capable of enduring what you have suffered.

All praise be rendered unto you, soldiers! A grateful country will owe to you

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The eloquence of the moderns is characterized by features altogether distinct from that of the ancients; and each nation, moreover, has its peculiar oratory, more or less approaching to argumentative eloquence, in proportion as passion has been subdued and reason cultivated. In English parliamentary discussions, the proportion of argument very far exceeds that of de-

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its prosperity; and if, as conquerors of Toulon, you heralded the immortal campaign of 1793, your present victories presage one still more glorious.

The two armies which formerly attacked you with bold assurance, fly panic-struck before you; the malignant men who derided your misery and rejoiced in prognostications of the triumphs of your enemies, are confounded and struck with trepidation.

But, soldiers, you have done nothing, whilst anything remains to be done. Neither Turin nor Milan is yours: the ashes of Tarquin's conquerors are still trampled by the assassins of Basseville!

You were destitute of everything at the opening of the campaign; you are now abundantly provided. The magazines taken from your enemies are numerous; the siege and field artillery is arrived. Soldiers, the country expects from you great things! Will you justify its expectation? The greatest obstacles doubtless are overcome; but you have still battles to fight, towns to take, rivers to pass. Are there any amongst you whose courage slackens?—any who would rather return to the peaks of the Apennines and Alps, than encounter the attacks of a slavish soldiery? No! there are none such among the conquerors of Montenotte, Millesimo, Dego, Mondovi! All burn with zeal to carry further the glory of the French people—all desire to dictate a glorious peace, one calculated to indemnify the country for the immense sacrifices it has made; all desire on returning into the bosom of their families, to say with pride, 'I belonged to the victorious army of Italy!'

My friends!—I promised you this career of victory; but there is one condition you must swear to observe: it is to respect the populations you are going to deliver—it is to repress the horrible excesses in which wretches indulge, excited by our enemies: otherwise you will not be the liberators of populations, you will be their scourge; you will not be the honor of the French nation—it will disown you. Your victories, your courage, the blood of your brethren killed in battle—all will be lost, even honor and glory. As to myself and the generals who have your confidence, we should blush to command an army without discipline, without check, which recognizes no law but force. But, invested with the national authority, I will teach those few heartless cowards to respect the laws of humanity and honor which they trample under foot. I will not suffer brigands to sully your laurels."

Here is another fine specimen of the same order. The soldiers of the first regiment of artillery had mutinied, and taken by force the citadel of Turin. Bonaparte announces to them the dissolution of their body:—

"Soldiers, your conduct in the citadel of Turin has resounded through all Europe. Our enemies have rejoiced to see you mutinous and criminal; profound grief has preceded, in the hearts of your fellow-citizens, the cry of vengeance. You have rendered great services; you are covered with honorable wounds; you have gained them for the glory of the republic. It has triumphed over its enemies; it holds the first rank amongst nations! But what avails it such greatness, if its undisciplined sons allow themselves to be misled by the unbridled passions of

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clamation and pathos; in France for many years it has been the reverse; and yet, if we take the two great orators of each country at the close of last century—Mirabeau and Lord Chatham—it cannot be denied that the latter often vented his feelings in language as passionate and indignant as the former. Nevertheless, English eloquence is essentially argumentative; and, since 1830, and even before that period, the oratory of France has likewise gradually assumed a more sober and rational tone, which must be considered as a very great progress. All who are acquainted with the parliamentary career of Royer-Collard, Guizot, and Odilon Barrot, will acknowledge the truth of this observation.

Eloquence formed one of the remarkable phenomena that illustrated the commencement of the great Revolution. Senatorial oratory, previously unknown in France, suddenly acquired an expansion commensurate with the ideas of liberty, and like them it partook of wildness and extravagance. It was marked by passion, by fury against the past subjection, and by virulence of attack and retort. It was chiefly adapted to excite the populace to phrenzy and violence. The ancient monarchy, the ancient society, fell before its blast—their very elements were crushed to atoms and trampled in the dust. Barnave, Mirabeau, and all the orators of that party, were the enthusiastic visionaries of freedom, which they could neither systematize for their country nor allure it to receive from them. Mirabeau, above all, whose wrath was roused by seventeen *lettres de cachet* directed against him, distinguished himself as the popular champion and the inveterate foe of the court. Gifted with a persevering audacity, he came to the States-General with an inflexible resolution to curtail the power of which he had been the victim, and to win for himself fortune and glory. The very flagitiousness of his morals was an object of terror. He used to repeat, that petty morality was destructive of great. He possessed, nevertheless, a kind of good nature, and many traits of generosity and magnanimity; but they could not redeem what he himself called the *infamy of his youth*. The undaunted and aspiring mind of

a few wretches? You have entered without order and tumultuously into a fortress, violating all the posts, without paying any respect to the flag of the French people planted on the walls. The brave officer who was charged with its defence you have slain—you have passed over his body. You are all guilty; the officers who were unable to restrain you from this excess, are not worthy to command you. This flag that you have forsaken, which could not rally you, shall be hung in the Temple of Mars, and covered with funereal crape. Your corps is dissolved."

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Mirabeau had revealed itself to his age upon an extraordinary occasion. Being expelled from the assembly of the nobles at Marseilles, he exclaimed, "So perished the last of the Gracchi; but, before yielding up his life, he threw dust towards heaven, and from that dust Marius grew—Marius, less great as the exterminator of the Cimbri, than as the destroyer of patrician aristocracy in Rome!" These words expressed his resolution; he lived to accomplish it, and involved the monarchy in similar ruin. He said on his deathbed, "I carry to my grave the shreds of the monarchy."

In the struggles of factions which succeeded, and when the rage which inspired the first representatives had accomplished all its purposes, public speaking declined. Under Robespierre, silence was safety and remonstrance death. Under Napoleon, public and political oratory was incompatible with the existence of military despotism; he crushed every effort of the kind. In 1815, parliamentary speaking revived with the Bourbons and the constitution of Louis XVIII. The fifteen years of the Restoration were signalized by many pitched battles in the chambers between the progressive spirit of the nineteenth century and the old feudal ideas, which all the deadly blows of the Convention had not sufficed to eradicate, and which then threatened to resume their former sway and predominance.

A false notion—indeed a very ridiculous error—has long prevailed in England, namely, that no revival of anything like oratory has taken place in France, owing to a custom supposed to have been adopted in the French chambers, of reading prepared instead of delivering extempore speeches. Nothing can be more erroneous: the truth is, that a deputy may read if he chooses, and sometimes an inferior member of the chamber, who may have many rational ideas to convey, but lacks oratorical powers, takes advantage of this privilege, and harangues from a manuscript. But no orator ever reads; and far from there being no revival of oratory under the Restoration, we may affirm that the energetic eloquence of Manuel and General Foy, the powerful logical oratory of Royer-Collard and Benjamin Constant, have seldom been surpassed; and in our own time, since 1830, every one has heard of the greatness of MM. Berryer, Guizot, Odilon Barrot, and others.

The first great attack of the royalists on modern liberal ideas took place in the Chamber of Deputies in 1815; they had secured a great majority in the house, and breathed a spirit of implacable hatred towards all innovations and liberties, which, in

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their eyes, seemed sacrilegious: they boldly evinced their intention of reconstructing society as it stood in 1789. The liberty of the press was restricted, arbitrary courts established, and every shadow of individual liberty annihilated: fearing afterwards that the judges would not long remain passive instruments, according to their desires, they proposed to do away with the permanency of juridical functions. The leaders of the constitutional party, Royer-Collard, De Serres, and Pasquier, saw the danger of the country and of monarchy itself in these culpable proceedings, and opposed the measure in question with all their might. M. Royer-Collard was then commencing that noble career in which he approved himself the most philosophical orator of France, and the unflinching advocate of reason and justice; the forcible eloquence of his speeches on this occasion was crowned by a great parliamentary triumph: he reclaimed from its vicious purpose the vindictive majority, and had the glory of saving the permanency of the magistracy.

During the following four or five years the chambers were alternately agitated by discussions on electoral rights and the liberty of the press. As to the struggles on the franchise, indeed, they never ceased during the fifteen years of the Restoration. The cause of this incessant strife is sufficiently obvious. The elective system is the basis on which the destinies of modern nations depend; it regulates and confers power, and is in all respects the most vital and important topic that can occupy the attention of legislatures.

In 1830, after the revolution, the electoral basis was considerably enlarged; and now a part of the nation begins to claim a mode of election which nearly approaches universal suffrage. But, during the first years of the Restoration, the debates on electoral reform were confined in object, owing to the compulsory narrowness of views imposed upon the liberal party, and to its constant defeats. With respect to the liberty of the press, many noble efforts were made in both chambers to obtain at least a partial removal of the fetters which bound it, and M. de Chateaubriand stood among the foremost of its champions. Liberalism was progressive. In 1818, three men, much dreaded by the royalists, made their appearance in the Chamber of Deputies; they were—Lafayette, Manuel, and Benjamin Constant. A very erroneous supposition prevailed, that Lafayette could have saved Louis XVI. His loyalty, exile, sufferings, and horror of revolutionary excesses, were overlooked; the royalists merely saw in him the admirer of democracy in America, and

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the enthusiastic partisan of the new ideas. Manuel had distinguished himself at the bar by his energetic eloquence and liberal opinions. Benjamin Constant had fixed the public attention by his works, by his constitutional principles and cosmopolite views; he had lived for some time in Edinburgh, in the university of Oxford, and in Germany, and enjoyed the intimacy of Sir James Mackintosh, Erskine, Schlegel, and Madame de Staël.

In 1819 the system of elections was again taken up, and provoked a multitude of discussions full of acrimony. Nevertheless, the violence of political passions was subsiding, when the horrible murder of the Duke of Berry supplied the royalists with a new theme of invective and a ground of resistance to amelioration; they accused the liberal party of having indirectly caused the crime by exciting hatred against the Bourbons. Happily, the occasion thus adroitly seized failed to produce the expected consequences; and the discussions on the electoral system were resumed, in which Royer-Collard took a prominent part, with the ability and eloquence we have before characterized.

But it was during the ministry of M. de Villèle that the parliamentary proceedings possessed the greatest interest, and during which the elder branch of the Bourbon family was at the zenith of power. The birth of the Duke of Bordeaux had given a firm basis to the dynasty. The liberal party was in a yet greater minority; but its energy increased with the feebleness of its numbers: General Foy came to strengthen it by his indomitable boldness. M. de Villèle was a skilful statesman; he may in many points be compared to Sir Robert Walpole: they both evinced the same experience in affairs, the same ability in upholding the prerogatives of the crown, the same dislike to war, the same indifference to national glory, and the same unscrupulous dexterity in the choice of expedients conducive to their designs. M. de Villèle became President of the Council in 1821, and managed to retain his office nearly seven years; he was afterwards elevated to the peerage, and succeeded by M. de Martignac. His ministry—a very long one for France—was one continued conflict with the ablest men of the time—such as Foy, Laffitte, Dupont-de-l'Eure, Benjamin Constant; and he had also to contend with the demands and exigencies of the court and of his own party.

The most stormy debates that occurred during the Villèle administration were occasioned by the invasion of Spain in 1823. The ministry demanded an extraordinary credit to defray the charges of the proposed expedition to protect the King of Spain

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against the constitutionalists of the Peninsula. General Foy stood among the foremost of those who opposed the intention of destroying the germs of liberty in a foreign land. General Foy had acquired great fame under Massena and in Spain: his generosity and frankness had endeared him to all: during his long military career he was always accompanied by his library, and he used to study Tacitus, Cæsar, and Montesquieu, in the intervals left him after a march or after a battle. His capacious memory, powerful voice, and expressive physiognomy when kindled with enthusiasm or contracted by anger, gave to him extraordinary weight as a speaker; and none possessed more than he the talent of quick and cutting repartee. When once imprudently asked what he meant by aristocracy—"Aristocracy?" he instantly exclaimed, "I will tell you. Aristocracy is the league, the coalition of those who would consume without producing, live without toiling, fill all offices without capacity to perform their duties, monopolize all honors without having deserved them—this is aristocracy." General Foy's industry was indefatigable; there was not a subject of public interest which he had not mastered down to its minutest details.

It was in the course of these debates that the scandalous expulsion of Manuel from the Chamber of Deputies took place. His exertions had long been ardently and uniformly directed against the undue encroachments of the royalists; he had become their most formidable antagonist, and they occasionally attempted to put him down by unjustifiable and dastardly means. But his firmness was indomitable, and the treatment he experienced rendered him as much the idol of the people as General Foy himself. Manuel was distinguished for an impetuous and concentrated grandeur, a scornful energy, a retentive memory, and a comprehensive mind. The royalists at length seized an opportunity of relieving themselves from his galling opposition. He was replying to M. de Chateaubriand's celebrated defence of the French invasion of Spain; he had already been called to order for applying the epithet "atrocious" to the government of Ferdinand VII.; he continued, however, in the same strain, and made a severe allusion to the emigrants that was barely endured, when finally he exclaimed—"Can you have forgotten that, from the moment foreign powers invaded the French territory, revolutionary France felt the necessity of defending herself by new forms and new energy"—— A sudden and furious explosion stopped the orator. Nothing was heard but "Down with him!" "Out with the regicide!" Manuel remained unmoved, with his

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arms crossed on his breast, and he repeated the phrase with imperturbable coolness. The exasperation was inflamed to frenzy. His expulsion was instantly moved and voted. He firmly insisted that those who had sent him there had alone the right to remove him; and he refused to quit the chamber until the *gensdarmes* approached to drag him forth. The national guards had refused to interfere. When Manuel had shown that he only yielded to violence, he rose and walked out, followed by all his party. The people received him with acclamations: addresses poured in from all quarters: but he never returned to the Chamber; his expulsion proved permanent; and four years afterwards he expired in the arms of Béranger (in 1827), of a disease that had long wasted his frame.

The new elections of 1824 ruined the liberal party; the fraudulent manœuvres of M. de Villèle had prevented the re-election of many members of the opposition; others had refused to return to the Chamber after the expulsion of Manuel; and the constitutional party was reduced to seventeen members to oppose the mass of royalists. The nation seemed, as it were, in a state of torpor: as long as General Foy, however, lived, words of liberty and justice were heard in the chamber. When he entered the house after those elections, he exclaimed, with a sad and subdued indignation—"Elections are at an end in France; they have been made fraudulently and traitorously." He lived some time longer to check the abuses of royalism. The last occasion on which he exhibited his impetuous and splendid eloquence was on the proposition of M. de Villèle to indemnify the emigrants with a thousand millions of francs, and at the same time to reduce the public funds as a compensation to government. The iniquity of this measure revolted the country, and very justly, for it only indemnified those who had fled from the revolutionary storm to the detriment of others who had remained in their native country and been ruined by sharing its misfortunes. General Foy's magnificent speeches on the subject, as well as the efforts of Casimir Perier, who came forward for the first time as an orator on this occasion, failed to prevent the measure from being carried by the majority of the Villèle party. It was, however, afterwards rejected by the House of Peers. The general died soon after, in 1825, and was followed to his grave by the whole population of Paris, in tears.

The implacable Roman Catholic and royalist government proposed, during the subsequent years, several laws equally iniquitous, and bearing also an extraordinary character of absurdity

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when considered with reference to the era in which they were brought forward. Such, for instance, was an antichristian law, inflicting the punishment of death for the offence of sacrilege; and another, introduced by M. de Peyronnet, for the final abolition of the liberty of the press. The abominable spirit of the first was vainly demonstrated by the philosophical eloquence of M. Royer-Collard, and the latter was prudently postponed. But the most audacious attempt of feudal royalism, and at the same time, it must be acknowledged, the most indispensable to the accomplishment of its views of reviving the former aristocracy, was a new law proposed by M. de Peyronnet for the restoration of primogeniture. From one extremity of France to the other, the proposition excited a profound sensation; the nation stood in anxious expectation, awaiting the result. The law was naturally presented to the Chamber of Peers, and there it encountered a determined opposition from men bearing the oldest names in France, but who were convinced that a return to primogeniture would plunge France either into a new revolution or into the stagnant despotic system of former times. Counts Molé and Siméon, Barons Pasquier and De Barante, and the Duke de Broglie, argued against it in luminous and effective speeches; Count Roy, the largest landed proprietor in France, and, it is understood, the wealthiest individual also, proved how greatly the subdivision of property tended to promote agriculture and the general prosperity of the country: his testimony bore a material character, more weighty, perhaps, than the high moral reasonings urged by the Duke de Broglie. The law was rejected; and France celebrated with shouts of joy the triumph of morality and reason.

Some few years after these imprudent attempts, the infatuation of Charles X. drove him to yet greater follies; the *ordonnances*, which placed the liberty of the press and the electoral franchise in abeyance, were scarcely signed ere the metropolis were in arms; and after three days' skirmishing, a fresh dynasty was placed on the throne of France, to protect a new state of things—a more democratic organization. But when the most important of all fundamental laws—the electoral law—came to be discussed, it speedily transpired that a democratic constitution was not so easily to be framed, and that it would have to encounter serious impediments. The primary indication of this counteracting influence was supplied by the rejection of a sensible proposition for adding to the electoral body the members of all professions requiring capacity and study; instead of which

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money was made the sole qualification for exercising the right of suffrage; and the consequence is, that a large portion of the people is now claiming a new electoral organization. M. Odilon Barrot has always been, together with M. Arago, the firm and faithful supporter of a democratic system of election; they are now the representatives of the party demanding an electoral reform. M. Odilon Barrot, in particular, has possessed, since 1830, great individual influence—greater, perhaps, than any other member of the Chamber, from the exemplary prudence and honesty that have marked his long political career. His speeches exhibit thoughtfulness and reflection, with a vein of sound morality, well calculated to make a deep impression; he is a discreet and dignified speaker, and yet far from being a cold and formal one; on the contrary, he warms and grows animated as he proceeds, and occasionally gives vent to feelings gushing eloquently from the heart. He is accused by his party of being too backward and circumspect, because, perfectly master of his own passions, he strives to calm those of others, and plans his course of action with a deliberation distasteful to mercurial temperaments. It is observed of him that he displays admirable skill and alacrity in extricating from difficulty any of his party who may have unwittingly entangled themselves, and, with reference to his whole conduct, he has often been called the Fabius of the opposition.

Since 1830, a new race of orators has arisen in the Chamber of Deputies: the few of the Restoration who remain are mostly silent, leaving the field to the new generation. M. Royer-Collard, who yet sits in the House, has never spoken since the revolution; his silence has been styled a *public calamity*, and it may very justly be so deemed, on account of the transcendent qualities he possesses, fitting him to counsel a legislative body. M. de Cormenin says of him, in his *Orateurs Parlementaires*, "a word, a single axiom, fructified by the meditation of this strong brain, enlarged and expanded, grows like an acorn that becomes an oak, all of whose parts are connected with one trunk, and which, animated by the same life, nourished by the same sap, forms but one whole, despite the variety of its foliage and the endless multiplicity of its branches." And such were indeed the discourses of M. Royer-Collard—admirable for the vigor of their style, the beauty of their form, and the unity of their principle. Original and profound, he has been called a speaking thought, an excavator of ideas.

M. Dupin (the elder), whose brother, Charles Dupin, is well

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known as a statistician, is also one of the celebrated orators of the Restoration, obscured by the eclat of a new generation; he has always been a rough, bold, irregular, fanciful speaker. Since 1830, he has wavered in his political career; it would be difficult indeed to say to what party he belongs. He acquired great fame during the Restoration, not only by his parliamentary activity and constitutional opinions, but also as the defender of Marshal Ney, Sir Robert Wilson, and Béranger.

After 1830, the lovers of peace and order beheld with alarm the democratic ferment assuming a fearful and threatening aspect: the sympathies for Poland were agitating the whole nation. There reigned a general dread of an European war, and of the violence of the multitude, when Casimir Perier was called in 1831 to the Presidency of the Council. His powerful hand checked the revolutionary movement; his active vigor and zealous exertions in the Chamber successfully resisted the democratic torrent; he restored everything to its former place, and tranquillized Europe. But Perier's struggles and ardor exhausted his frame: his passions, so often roused by the cold hostility of Odilon Barrot or General Lamarque, so often forcibly subdued, destroyed his vital organs; he expired in May 1832, deeply regretted by the lovers of peace, and the whole moderate party, and esteemed by all.

After the presidency of Casimir Perier, the most important ministry that succeeded was that of M. Thiers, who at three different periods has been called to the head of affairs. He possessed neither birth, fortune, nor connection, before 1830; but he is a superior writer, and perhaps the cleverest man in France: his name had been known as a contributor to the *National* and the *Constitutionnel*, and his *History of the French Revolution* opportunely appeared to establish his fame and to stamp his principles. He was returned to the Chamber of Deputies by his native town of Aix soon after the revolution, and became immediately conspicuous for the sagacity of his views and great dexterity. But he who had been a contributor to the *National*, who had evinced in his works strong democratic tendencies, soon became —whether conscientiously or through ambition we will not presume to say—an advocate of tranquillity and order, and undertook to continue the work of Casimir Perier in checking the democratic mania: he had moreover to put down the legitimist insurrection in La Vendée. The opposition waxed furious when it beheld the man it had considered its firmest champion adopting prudent and restrictive measures. M. Thiers, however, steadily

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prosecuted the task he had undertaken: he kept France secure from anarchy and democratic excesses, without infringing constitutional principles; and twice, when the crown refused to adopt his energetic measures in favor of liberty, he retired from office. M. Thiers has lately been at the head of the ministry again, but this time strengthened by, and united to, the whole opposition, supported by the democratic leaders, Odilon Barrot, Garnier Pages, and the rest. To explain this political anomaly, it may be said, that, as the country is now secure, and no excesses are feared, he has returned to his broad constitutional ideas and views, and that he feels, in truth, the necessity of planting stronger barriers against the encroachments that may yet be attempted on the liberties of France.

M. Thiers, owing to his various political positions and to the measures adopted by him when minister, has made himself a multitude of virulent and implacable enemies; but he will doubtless yet exercise great influence in France, especially if, as will in all probability be the case, he yet remain faithful to the opposition, into whose arms he has lately thrown himself. His persuasive eloquence has often been unexpectedly successful, and he has been known to obtain a great and unhoped-for majority by his lucid and convincing expositions. His oratory is all nature, ease, frankness, and attractive familiarity; his expressions are brilliant, lively, animated, and never fail to make an impression on the Chamber, be his theme ever so unpopular. The admirers of Mr. Shiel have compared him to M. Thiers, but we are disposed to believe that the latter bears a greater similarity to Sheridan; they both seem to have the same elegant colloquial flow of oratory, the same modulated tone, and the same inexplicable embarrassment at the commencement of a discourse, soon wearing away, and giving place to a clear, distinct intonation, and rich exuberance of unprepared flowing language.

The man who—though a sincere constitutionalist—has undoubtedly imposed the greatest restrictions on the democratic spirit of the revolution of 1830, is M. Guizot. He commenced by giving his powerful assistance to Casimir Perier, and has since been indefatigable in pursuing the policy of that eminent statesman. When M. Guizot ascends the tribune, his gravity, profound knowledge, and known integrity, immediately command general silence and respect. He is one of the most eloquent men of the age: his oratory is incisive and impressive; his deep voice and lofty expressions are highly effective. In his speeches he always selects some one idea or prominent point of view, and

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makes that the basis of his discourse: he never gives way to sudden emotions of any kind, and never indulges in personality. The parliamentary life of M. Guizot has been, since 1830, one continued and violent struggle; all the stringent measures he has succeeded in passing through the Chambers as bulwarks of peace and order, have always been opposed with vigor and impetuosity, often with rancor and abuse, by many of the most formidable men of our time. M. Guizot must have a soul of adamant, a frame of iron, to have withstood the reiterated and virulent assaults to which he has been lately exposed in the Chamber: we have heard MM. Berryer, Odilon Barrot, Thiers, Arago, Mauguin, shower down upon him in succession philippics of the fiercest and most envenomed character; while he, ever calm and dignified, refutes all, parries all, with passionless arguments, with austere, overpowering reason. However restrictive may be the constitutional principles of M. Guizot, let it be said to his honor, that his inexorable perseverance, his firmness and courage in resistance, arise from a sincere conviction that his own views are the most salutary for his country: not one of his antagonists, not his most implacable foe, would venture to allege that M. Guizot had ever acted from mere ambitious views or from personal interest. So much for M. Guizot as a politician and orator: we will afterwards regard him as the immortal historian.

We have spoken of the present opposition party in the Chamber of Deputies (the Chamber of Peers is a complete nullity). This party is the most popular in the nation; it often counterbalances and vanquishes the conservative party, and the measures it has in view are of vital importance to France—the most vital of all, as we have said, the reform of the electoral system. The opposition in the French Chamber of Deputies is the expression of the democratic tendencies of France; and it cannot be doubted that, despite the resistance of M. Guizot, Count Molé, Marshal Soult, and others, it will in time triumphantly obtain all it contends for, and France will then be a complete democratic monarchy, unless any imprudence on the part of the crown or other enemies of democracy, provoke a new conflagration, which would probably be followed by a republic, by a European war, and by an immediate definitive struggle between the two principles, aristocracy and democracy. Or if there be no imprudence, no violence, the slow but sure progress of constitutional liberty and democratic ideas will eventually work out its inevitable consequences.

The opposition in the Chamber of Deputies has now M. Thiers

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again in its ranks, M. Odilon Barrot, M. Garnier Pagès, known for his energetic eloquence, and M. Mauguin, whose commanding person and style of oratory remind one of O'Connell. All who hear M. Mauguin are forcibly impressed with the nerve, manliness, readiness, clearness, and fluency of his oratory; he adds great strength to the opposition by his well-deserved popularity and influence. To the list must be added M. Arago, who stands pre-eminent among the celebrated men of Europe. Unlike many orators who *will* speak on all subjects, M. Arago only speaks on questions that he has studied—questions possessing either the interest of political circumstances or the attraction of science. When he ascends the tribune, his noble figure and fine head awe the assembly into attention. If he confines himself to the narration of facts, his eloquence has the natural grace of simplicity; when face to face with a question of paramount importance to the liberty of his country, or with one of science, whether in the Chamber or in the professional chair, he contemplates his subject with earnestness, unravels its subtleties, and evinces a power of comprehension and elucidation which bespeaks the superior mind; proceeding, he begins to employ a splendid phraseology—his voice swells—his style grows richer and richer, and his eloquence rises to the grandeur of his theme. M. Arago's speeches have both generality and actuality; they equally address themselves to the intelligence and the passions of his audience; when he enters upon any question or matter, whether scientific or political, he clears it of its difficulties and technicalities, and renders it so precise and perceptible, that the most ignorant and dull are enabled to see and comprehend it. His is one of the most luminous intellects of the age.

The democratic party of the Chamber of Deputies reckons also other men of great personal influence; among whom for instance, are M. Dupont-de-l'Eure, Lafitte, M. Audry de Puyraveau, and Viscount de Cormenin, the celebrated pamphleteer.

We cannot close our cursory observations on the orators of France, and their influence on its political tendencies, without speaking of the most illustrious of all, M. Berryer. M. Berryer is the sole but powerful supporter of the legitimist party, whose ranks grow daily thinner; indeed, without M. Berryer, legitimacy and the elder branch of the Bourbons would be now as deeply buried in oblivion as during the prosperous period of Napoleon's reign. The torrent of democratic ideas seems to carry down and overbear every other feeling, in like manner as the military glory of the empire engrossed all minds at the

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commencement of the century. But M. Berryer, although a legitimist, and thus politically isolated, is also a sincere and ardent patriot, and he loses no opportunity of rendering conducive to the advantage and liberty of his country his natural hostility to the government of 1830. During the last ten years, he has ever shown himself ready to oppose, with all the powers of his intellect and oratory, every measure he deemed detrimental to the freedom and welfare of the nation; and has proved himself a most formidable antagonist to the new government. M. Berryer has received from nature all the gifts that tend to form the complete orator: his face and figure are at once engaging and commanding, and his voice is of such extraordinary compass, as to exercise on an audience a stimulating, exciting effect, altogether indescribable. But, sonorous as are the tones of his voice, he modulates them with exquisite taste and grace. He is likewise endowed with a prodigious memory, and he often amazes his hearers by his accuracy in citing facts, dates, and matters of minute detail.

M. Berryer has an admirable mode of distributing his arguments, and managing his transitions; he is a profound master of rhetoric; nothing can exceed his skill in laying the train for an effect, or working his way towards his main object from afar, or in introducing a parenthetical allusion to arouse attention, and prepare the way for those vivid bursts and apostrophes by which he electrifies his hearers. During a late and celebrated discourse of his in the Chamber of Deputies, on the conduct of France upon the Eastern question, the whole assembly, breathless and riveted, twice instinctively rose, so great was the febrile excitement caused by his overpowering eloquence. M. Berryer's speeches are always unprepared; he merely studies the subject of debate, sums up in his mind the preceding discussions, and ascends the tribune. Many of his finest oratorical displays have been provoked by some unexpected observation or proposition; being taken unawares is a matter of perfect indifference to him, for he invests whatever he may say with all the charms of order and felicitous adaptation. It would be a great error to suppose that M. Berryer is an orator actuated by passion and imagination only; those impulses are kept in subjection to the purer emotions of the heart, and to lofty ratiocination. Upon many political questions canvassed since 1830, no one has surpassed him in logical power. Whoever has heard him only once, cannot well judge him, for his eloquence varies according to his subject: when necessary, he appeals, with the impetuosity of Mira-

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beau or of Chatham, to honor, glory, and justice; on another occasion, he grapples firmly and calmly with his topic, and analyzes it with grave judgment; and he has been heard to discuss for hours a financial question, with the sagacity and clearness of a deeply versed chancellor of the exchequer. M. Berryer combines, in a higher degree than any modern orator, the qualifications of a perfect speaker. Lord Chatham is the only man who can be compared to him; but the French orator is far more intellectual, and of a more universal genius. The eloquence of the English statesman was roused by flagrant errors and iniquities, fitted to excite indignation in the breast of any one possessing a spark of feeling. M. Berryer, besides similar outbursts of wrathful elocution, has often mounted in his speeches to the highest spheres of intellect, and handled multifarious and diversified special questions with the ease and knowledge of a man solely conversant with each. The great misfortune of M. Berryer, in our opinion, is to belong to the legitimist party; for there he is very far from exercising on his country the influence he might otherwise command; the deputies and the nation, always perceiving his legitimist ideas lurking in his parliamentary efforts, endeavor to shake off, as soon as possible, the stunning effect of his eloquence.

To conclude. The French legislature has had vast difficulties, both internal and external, to contend with during these last ten years. A nation has little time to think of creating and enforcing laws favorable to its liberty and prosperity, when threatened with civil war, and when the sovereigns of Europe, uneasy on their thrones, have their eyes, flashing defiance and hatred, anxiously fixed on all its movements. To this must be attributed the little progress that has resulted to French civilization and legislative improvement from the national crisis of 1830. But we repeat, the symptoms of tranquil progress and of firmly established liberty seem evident. There is every reason to hope, that those who steer the vessel of the state duly appreciate those blessings, and are now made aware that the grandeur and futurity of a nation depend wholly on a social education founded on religion, on a just and humane organization of industry and labor, under the balmy and fecund influence of rational freedom.

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CHAPTER FIFTH.

CRITICISM.

Character of Modern Criticism.—Hume's Observation.—Object of Critical Literature—its Progress.—Laharpe's Work—his System of Criticism compared with that of our Time.—Ginguené's History of Italian Literature.—Sismondi's History of the Literature of the South of Europe.—Chénier's Tableau.—M. de Barante's Account of the Literature of the Eighteenth Century.—M. Villemain—first part of his Literary Life—his subsequent Labors—his Life of Cromwell—his Lectures on French Literature—their Popularity—Character of his Delivery—his Sources of Knowledge—Beauty and Defects of M. Villemain's Criticisms—his two Additional Volumes on the Literature of the Eighteenth Century—his style.—M. Nisard.—M. Sainte-Beuve—his Criticisms—his work on Port-Royal.—Account of the Convent of Port-Royal—its Fame—Learning of its Recluses—their Works—Destruction of the Convent.—Character of M. Saint-Beuve's History of Port-Royal.—Dr. Reuchlin's Work on the same Subject.—M. Gustave Planche—compared to M. Sainte-Beuve—M. Planche's Criticisms—his free Use of English Materials—his Criticisms on several English Writers—on Sir E. Bulwer.—M. Ampère's History of the Literature of France before the Twelfth Century—Object and Character of the Work.—M. de Chateaubriand.—M. Lerminier.—Study of English and German Literature in France.—M. Victor Hugo's Prefaces.—Criticisms of the Periodical Press.—French Reviews.—*Le Journal des Savants.*—The Periodical Press of France compared to that of England.—The Paris Newspapers.—Their Literary Merit.—General Tendency for Newspaper Writing—arises from Education.—Difference of the Education given in France and England.—Royal University of France—its Organization.—Classical Learning.—French Editions and Translations of the Classics.—M. Letronne. General View of the State of Criticism.

CRITICISM, in its more lofty departments especially, has undergone many changes in our time, which will hereafter produce good fruit: it has acquired a character of superiority, resulting naturally from the extension of intercourse among nations and the growth of their reciprocal influences. The observation of Hume, that "criticism will never be of any value until critics cite numerous examples," could only be applied now to the inferior branch of criticism—to scholastic criticism, which at all times has fed upon examples.

The excellence of high critical literature consists in combining a profound and comprehensive knowledge of history with great powers of imagination, in order to vivify the past. Criticism must follow the tide of ages, marking not only the vigorous in-

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tellects that speak with the accent and tone of their nation and epoch, but also the political condition, whose actuating influence is so powerful and universal on the development of genius. The critic, in following the stream of time, must alternately fix his eyes on the ruins he passes by and the abodes of the living; he must listen to the tumult that arises from the cities now flourishing, and note also the traces left on communities by preceding ages. Criticism, thus understood, is the history of intellect; it is history elucidated by the progress of arts and letters; it becomes a vast picture, presenting within its frame a succession of illustrious individuals, renowned in their day for deeds or meditations, together with all that has happened in the world attended by striking and important effects, thus forming the most instructive *ensemble* that can be offered to the study and contemplation of mankind. Nations succeed each other—governments are established and fall to the ground—great battles have been fought in every era; all these worldly commotions re-echo on the powerful intellects of each period, insomuch that criticism, or the history of letters, is the most animated part of history itself. When nations have disappeared from the earth, the literature that survives them serves as the beacon to guide explorers in the path of discovery and research. It is one of the characteristics of our age to have produced a class of men—however limited—whose delight it is, with poetic enthusiasm, to trace and investigate the remains of bygone ages. It would be difficult, perhaps, to define where this species of criticism first took birth. But setting other countries aside (especially Germany, where criticism has taken a very lofty flight), we have no example of it in France previous to Villemain. He was the first to feel that mere scholastic and literary inquiry could not satisfy the demands of our time, so aspiring in its objects of study, and so deeply agitated by political passions. M. Villemain was the first who blended political science with art, and who sought what had been the influence of an epoch on a writer; and although he may be reproached with a want of profundity, owing to his total ignorance of German literature, yet he always analyzes and delineates with perfect sagacity the genius of great men. Before him, criticism was in France of the nature of that alluded to by Hume and elucidated by Lord Kames; it kept in a special narrow path, aiming solely to teach the art of writing correctly and of expressing our thoughts rationally; or if it exceeded the prescribed limits, under pretence of adducing the laws of nature, it fell into the strangest aberrations. Criticism in France was, be-

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fore M. Villemain—and before M. Guizot, who is also a critic of eminence in his work on French Civilization—either cold, didactic, and fettered, like that of Laharpe, or lyrical and highly paradoxical, like that of Diderot.

The voluminous *Cours de Littérature* of Laharpe is a mere literary work—literary in the most confined sense of the word, and for that very reason, no doubt, it was never relished by any superior intellect, even at the time of its popularity, the close of the last century, although a great deal may certainly be learnt from it. Laharpe has more or less dissected all the chief productions in French literature. His peculiar merits, so especially vaunted in his own time, are all dependent on his characteristics of frigidity and equanimity. But how easy is it for one to be measured and coldly correct when he has no passions to rule, no deep questions to analyze—when criticism is confined to mere outward form! Laharpe estimates the genius of literary men, as formerly in France an individual was judged merely by his manners. We will not renew the reproach that has been so universally and justly addressed to him, of an unpardonable superficiality in his judgments on the ancients, and complete ignorance of foreign literature; we will only add that his sole object is to determine how far the writers he examines have adhered to the strict rules of rhetoric and taste; he does not go beyond that: while there can be no doubt that true feelings for the fine arts and for all that is beautiful and sublime, are much sooner and more impressively communicated in a familiar, animated conversation, as in M. Villemain's lectures for instance, and imbue the mind more deeply when treated in connection with the various literary and political influences at work, than by any pedantic dissection of mere forms, as practised by Laharpe. The difference between the two critics is strikingly exemplified in their respective accounts of the literature of the eighteenth century. M. Villemain not only travels into England, brings to light its leading authors, and marks the influence of its literature; but he portrays the levity, fatuity, and fermentation of the era, bewildered and agitated by that "philosophy," which, from its fatal and desolating effects, has acquired so dismal a renown—holds up to view the presiding spirits of the coming change, the cold and sarcastic Voltaire, the wild and enthusiastic Rousseau—and points with warning finger to the portents of revolution darkening the social horizon.

Although Laharpe lived in those very times, amidst the men acting conspicuous parts on the stirring stage, we fail to detect

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in his work a single spark of the spirit and actuating movement of his age. His history of literature resembles an immense cemetery, in which all the tombstones are arranged with exact symmetry; he rakes up in succession the slumbering remains, weighs them in his finical balance, and consigns them again to repose, without inquiring what they had been, of what nature was the life and blood that animated them, what moral vicissitudes they had undergone. This scholastic criticism has undoubtedly its advantages, we allow; it assigns the precise rules of good taste, points out the delicacies of pure language, proves mathematically the laws of grammar and rhetoric, and may check all proneness to exaggerations or innovations. But, as applied to a literary work, it is a mere dissection or cutting up, as we sometimes behold a fair flower plucked, mutilated, torn to pieces, in order to show the delicacy and secrets of its arrangement and formation. Still this forms but a limited study, in many cases an isolated ramification; others happily come, and show us the flower in all its native beauty and freshness, elegantly supported by its stem, and surrounded by all the harmonies in the midst of which nature has placed it. With respect to literature, such is more especially the task of the historian of general literature; it is what Laharpe did not understand, and what has been so admirably executed by M. Villemain. The other species of criticism is of a secondary nature: it is the department of special, individual criticism, limited to the thorough scrutiny of one single author, as practised so successfully in our time by MM. Sainte-Beuve and Nisard.

Whatever imperfections there may be in M. Villemain's works, he has certainly operated a great revolution in the history of literature; he has given to criticism that new and lofty tone which will perhaps remain among the most striking mementos of our age; he has reconciled and united the spirit of the arts with the searching impartiality of philosophy; he has loosened the genius of criticism from its rhetorical and classical circle, and carried it into all the departments of intellect; he has shown, as far as possible, that mental developments cannot be truly judged without the pliability which enables a man to throw off all personal prejudices and all peculiar habits of thinking, in order to place himself in the centre of another system of ideas, and to identify himself with the men of all countries and all ages.

But, long previous to the appearance of M. Villemain as a critic, the beginning of this century had hailed two works that rank high in the annals of literary criticism, both on account of

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the important subjects they canvass and the depth of observation they display. The first was Ginguené's *Histoire Littéraire de l'Italie*, an admirable monument, erected from the valuable materials left by Tiraboschi; and the other was the *Histoire de la Littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, by M. de Sismondi. These two excellent productions, although not written in the new spirit of M. Villemain, and not possessing all the freshness and novelty of his manner, are invaluable studies on foreign literature, clothed in an earnest vivid diction, which keeps alive and stimulates the interest of the reader. The nature of those literatures, besides, so exclusively national, and so far removed from our epoch of mutual contact and influences, did not equally require perhaps such extended and profound historical researches as those to which we have alluded; for no critic could have plunged into them more readily, and with more facility, than the learned Ginguené, or, in particular, M. de Sismondi, whose vast and comprehensive knowledge is so strikingly and abundantly exhibited in his *Histoire des Français*.

Another work of the same period deserves a passing notice, although of relatively inferior importance. M. J. Chénier, brother of the poet sent to the scaffold by Robespierre, gave, in his *Tableau de la Littérature Française*, a cursory but brilliant and striking account of the literature of France from the beginning of the French Revolution to about 1810: he found room in a very small volume for a multitude of clever, judicious observations, remarkable for their conciseness and lucidity. His animadversions and eulogiums are often just and fair, but he is also often misled by his passions and personal feelings, censuring undeservedly, and extolling upon reprehensible motives. Whatever may be the merits of the writers whom he reviews in his rapid analysis, there is no doubt that the period he embraces was merely preparatory to the present intellectual advance: most of those names, indeed, if not all, are now forgotten; both because ideas and principles have since undergone a complete revolution, and because of the gigantic steps that have been made in various departments of science and letters. As a transitory period, moreover, the men belonging to it could never enjoy more than a momentary celebrity.

The literature of the eighteenth century has naturally formed a frequent subject of critical dissertation. It has been provocative, more than any other, of passionate criticism; for the admirers of its revolutionary tendency laud it with fervor, whilst the partisans of the old system of things reprobate it with vehe-

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mence. Among the critics of the literature of the eighteenth century, the historian De Barante ranks as high as any; yet his *Histoire de la Littérature au Dix-huitième Siècle* is a cold, unsatisfactory work, although abounding with sound reasoning and learning: it has nothing of the animated style of his History of the Dukes of Burgundy. All the opinions and judgments pronounced in this review of the eighteenth century are doubtless demurely weighed, though unequivocally hostile to its spirit and writers; if we say that M. de Barante judges Rousseau with a stern, nay, unjust severity, the tone of his volume and the general tendency of his ideas will be understood. The work has, nevertheless, been much read by the public at large, as well from its intrinsic merit as the reputation of the author. But let us return to M. Villemain—let us see what color he has given to the eighteenth century, and let us follow him in his brilliant career as an historical critic; for his labors in that department have rendered him one of the most celebrated men in France—one of those who have effected a regeneration in their sphere, and exercised great influence over their contemporaries.

M. Villemain's literary career commenced with an early period of his life. When yet very young, he proved, by a *Discours sur la Critique*, how far his ideas and style were imbued with the genius of true criticism. He read it in 1814, in presence of the allied sovereigns, who were then in Paris. His excellent *éloge* of Montaigne, crowned by the *Académie Française*, had already been greatly admired, and it was afterwards followed by similar *éloges* on Pascal, Montesquieu, Fénélon, etc., all published some years afterward, under the title of *Mélanges Littéraires*.

The most brilliant period of M. Villemain's literary life began in 1816, when he was appointed to the chair of French Literature and Eloquence at the Faculty of Letters in Paris. He signalized his advent to the professorial dignity by inoculating criticism with a judicious compound of vivacity, imagination, biography, and history; and gradually, as his studies extended over a wider circle, his ideas acquired greater energy and originality, his eloquence became more glowing, and his admiration of intellectual greatness more enthusiastic. His lectures possessed in the highest degree all the attractions of a fascinating conversation. "In some respects we may say," observes M. Sainte-Beuve in his *Critiques et Portraits Littéraires*, "that there are two literatures, as in the ancient schools there were two doctrines—an official, written, conventional, professed, ciceronian, admirative literature; the other oral, conversational, anecdotical, jocular, ir-

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reverent, correcting and often defacing the first, ending sometimes almost wholly with contemporaries. M. Villemain possesses both in a greater degree than any other person at this time."

There are no records of his lectures during the first years, and it was only when, after a long interval, he re-ascended his professorial chair, that the *Cours de Littérature Française* was collected by the aid of stenography. Meanwhile, M. Villemain took an active part, at different periods, in political affairs, and in that career has always exhibited a firm progressive spirit and a lofty integrity. He is now a peer of France, Councillor of State, Minister of Public Instruction; he belongs to the Royal Council of the University, and is perpetual secretary of the *Académie Française*, in which capacity he wrote the elegant preface to the last edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*, after having actively co-operated in the task of editing that standard of the French language.

In 1820, M. Villemain published his Life of Cromwell, a work of great merit and impartiality, which has been much extolled by M. Guizot in the preface to his History of the English Revolution. In 1821, he was called to the *Académie Française*, to fill the seat left vacant by the death of M. de Fontanes. The fame of M. Villemain reached its highest point towards 1827, at the time he re-ascended his chair at the Sorbonne. His eloquence re-echoed through every part of France; each of his lectures became a literary event; the flocking of auditors to his lecture-room was unparalleled, with the exception of the crowds that went to hear M. Guizot and M. Cousin. Then the influence of the professor became immense: every sentence, every opinion, whatever it might be, that fell from his lips, was hailed like prophetic accents. Thus it was that many palpable literary errors and judgments of evident fallacy, accredited by the professor, were unhappily propagated and rooted in the popular mind of France. Of the five volumes comprising his lectures, then collected by stenography, two are on the middle ages, and three on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But the latter century was not completed: and some years afterwards, in 1837, he published two additional volumes, carefully composed in the closet, to supply the deficiency left in the literary history of that age. Of these two volumes, differing materially in character from the preceding, we shall speak hereafter.

The *Cours de Littérature Française*, spoken in the Sorbonne, bears all the characteristics of the professor's delivery: a kind of elegant carelessness, which the French call *négligence*, *abandon*

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—keenness of remark and observation—novelty, depth, and freshness of ideas. His striking parallels, and the infinite rays of light he throws on all he touches, and on objects unpereceived before, can be readily appreciated by the reader. Other merits, however, despite the care of the author in revising the stenographer's work, must escape, when the delivery is no longer there to impress the thoughts with its varied grace and energy. Those alone who have heard M. Villemain, can bear testimony to the brilliant capriciousness of his words, to the deep and impressive intonation of his voice, to the playfulness of his allusions, to his eloquent and compressed action, and to those numerous instances when his soul, heaving like a wave ready to burst, pauses and calmly subsides, resuming the dignity becoming a lecturer, and leaving an ineffable thrill of pleasurable emotion on the mind.

The originality of M. Villemain as a critic—that originality which elevates him to a position previously unknown in France —consists in his not being a critic of details: he does not apply, we repeat, a certain number of rules or principles of taste to the examination of some literary *chef-d'œuvre*, as Laharpe has done in several of the best parts of his work—in his criticisms on Racine and the *Henriade*, for instance. M. Villemain, possessing a profound knowledge of history, of antiquity, and of several modern literatures, never attempts to enter upon an analytical survey of the life and genius of an author without having previously acquired a perfect comprehension of his time. His style and manner convey an idea of the absolute freedom he gives to his literary investigations and oratory: he discards all subserviency to any particular formulas, rising or falling according to his subject, to his emotions, to his oratorical inspirations. History with him vivifies the imagination, and rhetorical precepts form but the groundwork of the picture.

When M. Villemain takes up the pen, he ceases to be the literary orator; he no longer possesses the same vivacity nor the same style. When he writes, his phraseology is no doubt more polished and perfect, fitting the thought with precision; but it bears, at the same time, a character of comparative frigid paleness, very different from the animation of his spoken lectures, as committed to paper by the stenographer. In the latter, he is all elasticity, takes all shapes, becomes, as it were, identified with the epoch and the learning he analyzes; he is often severe and sarcastic, but always with grace and decorum; his observations and decisions are often keen and cutting. In his lectures he exhibits in the highest degree what the ancients call the play-

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fulness of the orator, consisting of the attractive anecdote and the jocular sally; but when he indulges in this vein, he sometimes fears to exceed the bounds of moderation and elevated criticism; then he retracts with inimitable *finesse* what he has said, presents it almost immediately afterwards under a different light, rendering perhaps his meaning yet more evident in another form, and engages in an apparent struggle between vivacity and prudence, always terminating in agreeable and exquisite pleasantry, tempered still by a certain gravity. "M. Villemain," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "seems to belong exactly to that class of orators whom Cicero characterizes in various parts of his rhetorical works, by these expressions: '*Tenues, acuti, omnia docentes et dilucidiora facientes subtili quâdam et pressâ oratione limati.... faceti, florentes etiam et leviter ornati.... in narrando venusti.*' He has the *acumen* rather than the *lenitas* or the *vis*, which, according to Cicero, is particularly adapted to tuition."

M. Villemain possessed abundant sources of knowledge for his critiques, and what he drew from them, skilfully combined, formed the great material of his literary eloquence, so admirably ductile and pliable, and on all subjects so appropriate. The first of those sources consisted in a profound knowledge of antiquity and of the classic authors; the second was derived from an arduous study of the Fathers of the Church, who may be said to form the Christian antiquity. After having abundantly nourished his genius with those inestimable and inexhaustible remains of human intellect, the third mine he worked was England—Milton, Shakspeare, and the English orators. Germany was overlooked. In fact, M. Villemain had, by his investigations on England, imparted an impulse so great as to be justly deemed a mighty step for France—a country that had before been so exclusive, and a knowledge of Germany is only now beginning to be generally appreciated among writers. The fourth and last, but most prolific source of M. Villemain's criticisms, lay in his immense historical studies: he has plunged into all the darkness of the middle ages, and approved himself as erudite an historian, as able and sagacious a critic. Such is the vast stock of knowledge whence M. Villemain drew the multitude of parallels, the luminous illustrations, which characterize his lectures on French literature.

The criticisms of M. Villemain preserve a medium between the classicists and the romanticists. Although praised by the latter, he has not shown himself duly sensible of their eulogiums; for, in his Lectures on the Seventeenth Century, he often throws

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out indirect but warm reproaches on a school that had spoken irreverently of the polished language of Louis XIV.'s time, and even of the magnificent style of Bossuet. On the other hand, his propensity to extend the circle of literature and of the language, his evident partiality for some of the most decided modern innovations, clearly absolve him from the imputation of being blindly opposed to all efforts for breaking the fetters of the old school. M. Villemain's opinions on the eighteenth century steer equally clear of the fervent admiration entertained by many for the philosophy of that period, and, on the other hand, of the furious wrath with which it is regarded by the brethren of the modern Catholic school. Whilst sentiments and ideas remain in such conflict as at present, there is nothing so difficult as to form a candid judgment, a fair appreciation, of that extraordinary epoch. The historical critic could not fail to apprehend the great mission of the eighteenth century as an intermediate agency, to terminate all that belonged to the middle ages, and to prepare the way for the modern society. All the thinkers of the eighteenth century were heralds of the new era; but M. Villemain scarcely seems sufficiently convinced of the error of many of those philosophers who labored to involve in one common destruction institutions founded on piety and faith, and abuses that had become burdensome and oppressive; and, however studious his efforts to attain a strict impartiality, he is nevertheless often under the influence of the men he judges, and is partially dazzled by the splendor of their talents. We think him deficient in religious feeling, and for that sole reason we consider that his works are not destined to exercise a lasting influence on future generations: their real importance and value will gradually diminish; the basis being devoid of all divine spirit, the whole edifice, however grand, will totter, and then fall to the ground.

Other deviations from the strict integrity of criticism, besides that which refers to the eighteenth century, are to be found in M. Villemain's work; and likewise frequent assertions and estimates, which to many must seem the result of ignorance. We may adduce, as a striking corroboration of our remark, his unaccountable disdain for that sublime school of poetry, in the midst of which, and on the loftiest summit, we behold the noble genius of Wordsworth. M. Villemain is a stranger to, or does not feel, the mysterious beauties of that school; he probably does not understand them, because they are without the circle of the literary feelings of the last two centuries. He accordingly banishes from the rank of true poets the tender Cowper and the sublime Words-

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worth; he throws those immortal fathers of the true poetry of our age negligently among "*the strange and distempered minds*"—minds without any power over the imagination of others. The same deficiency of judgment and appreciation is manifest when he speaks of the poetry of the *Night Thoughts*. Young is sometimes monotonous, it is true; but where is the man possessing true poetical feelings who has not been moved by his dusky grandeur, by that solemn melancholy of the tomb and of eternity, clothed in the most majestic and luxuriant poetry?

We have intimated that the two additional volumes of M. Villemain on the eighteenth century, and published within these last few years, have a character of frigidity when compared to the vivid animation sparkling in the older portion of the work. They nevertheless breathe a spirit of wholesome criticism, and abound in admirable disquisitions. Nothing can be more interesting than to follow the author in his delineations of the ardent and capricious genius of Voltaire, or to accompany him in his lively and playful strain when treating the congenial subject of his inexhaustible wit and satire, until he pauses and calls him to judgment before the tribunal of reason and upon the eternal laws of morality. There are also some delightful pages on Vauvenargues, whose lofty and pensive soul is wreathed in the purest virtues; and also on Rousseau, who is tenderly treated by the critic, notwithstanding the few partial chidings he addresses to the philosopher of Geneva towards the close of the dissertation. M. Villemain, in these volumes, has often revived with a peculiar charm many forgotten names—Bonnet, L'Abbé Prévost, Rollin, D'Augesseau, Louis Racine; the passages devoted to them are to the reader like momentary gleams of sunshine, which unexpectedly burst through the overcharged atmosphere, and throw a soft and transient light on the surrounding landscape—on the distant verdure, which the dense gloom had already concealed from view. To conclude, M. Villemain has elevated criticism to the lofty grade of philosophic history, and given to it a form calculated to prevent its wandering in the world of abstraction; he was the first to act on that spirit which seeks to harmonize and reconcile discordant national elements, and to discard the prejudices of country, without, however, forfeiting the essential character of native originality, which sometimes, we fear, has led to error and misconception.

The distinguished critic, whom we have more than once had the opportunity of quoting, M. Sainte-Beuve, is the name which naturally presents itself, and may be appropriately placed after

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that of M. Villemain, although the position might be contested by M. Nisard, if he were professedly a regular critic, like M. Sainte-Beuve. M. Nisard's duties as a professor, and his functions in the Ministry of Public Instruction, throw him among the casual critics: his principal work, "Remarks on the Latin Poets of the Roman Decline," abounds in curious details, related with attractive elegance, and is fraught with profound classical investigation. There is, we think, great merit in thus bringing to light the intellectual productions of a period of decay; it is an arduous labor, highly deserving of gratitude. M. Nisard's *Mélanges Littéraires* consist of articles already published in the reviews, and form an interesting collection of various analyses and theses, remarkable for point, fluency, and nice discrimination. The essays on Victor Hugo and De Lamartine are particularly striking, although written with a pen dipped in gall and wormwood: they are indeed too severe—too deeply imbued with a spirit of malicious sarcasm. M. Nisard is now preparing a new translation of the Latin classics, in which he is assisted by many of his distinguished literary friends.

But M. Sainte-Beuve's critical works have been the occupation of his life, and entitle him to esteem and fame. He wrote, many years ago, when very young, a treatise on the French Literature of the Sixteenth Century, a book replete with much excellent criticism, but bearing at the same time manifold traces of inexperience, and of immaturity both in thought and style. Poetry has also been one of our author's pursuits, but one less successfully cultivated, for he is generally admitted to hold but a secondary place in the poetical hierarchy of the nineteenth century, notwithstanding the sweetness of some stanzas in the *Consolations* and the *Pensées d'Aout*. M. Sainte-Beuve excels principally in biographical criticism; his sole defect lies in his not penetrating sufficiently into the depths discovered by the German writers—by this we mean to intimate that he fails to enter far enough into the social order, amidst which lived all the characters whom he studies and portrays. But, on the other hand, he enters largely into the details of private life, presents them in the most poetic form, and depicts in their minutest shades all mental varieties; going no further. These are the characteristics and qualifications that constitute the great merit of the five volumes of his *Critiques et Portraits Littéraires*, and they impart an indescribable charm to his gallery of contemporary illustrations. His manner is original, from a mixture of calm reason, placid investigation, and tender melancholy, which is often peculiarly at-

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tractive. M. Sainte-Beuve has been reproached with elaborating too much his critical dissertations, and thus giving them a defective intricacy—covering them with shades and obscurity. This accusation rests undeniably on justice and truth: he assuredly entangles himself in unnecessary mazes, and occasionally loses that distinctive characteristic of the French mind, clearness. Among his critical portraits, those of Lamennais, B ranger, and George Sand, are especially remarkable for the beauty of their analysis.

M. Sainte-Beuve has commenced one of the most important and instructive critical works that can adorn the literature of any century or country; he has undertaken the history of Port-Royal, and published a first volume, after the persevering labors of many years. Port-Royal, sometimes called *Port-Royal des Champs*, was the name originally given to a conventual establishment for females, attached to the order of the Benedictines, and founded so early as the year 1204. Its site was about three leagues to the south of Versailles, and its foundress was Matilda, wife of Mathew de Marly, of the house of Montmorency. During four centuries, the history of the convent was unmarked by any event of particular importance. Towards the close of that period, the establishment fell into the relaxation of discipline which gradually corrupted so many of the contemporary religious houses on the continent. A regeneratrix at length arose in the person of Maria-Angelica Arnauld, who was appointed Abbess of Port-Royal about the year 1608, and who speedily rendered the convent a model of order and discipline to all similar institutions. The celebrity which she gave to it induced a number of the noblest ladies of the land, and even some of the princesses of the blood, to take up their residence near Port-Royal, that they might participate in its religious exercises.

Succeeding events elevated Port-Royal into still greater notice. Towards the middle of the seventeenth century, Antoine Arnauld, doctor of the Sorbonne, generally called *le grand Arnauld*, and who left behind him a great name in French literature, fixed his abode at Port-Royal, where, besides his sister the abbess, five other sisters, and his mother, with no less than six of his nieces, had their permanent residence. Arnauld was accompanied in his retreat from the bustle of the world by his brother Arnauld d'Andilly, Antoine Lemaistre, an advocate famous for his eloquence, Simon Lemaistre, and Isaac Louis Lemaistre, well known for his translation of the Bible. Five or six other individuals, all of them men of learning and virtue, sought at the same period

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the seclusion of Port-Royal, disgusted with the follies of an age on which their lessons were bestowed in vain. Their labors were more productive of good in the solitude to which they retired. Fixing their joint habitation near the convent, they divided their time between the cultivation of their little lands, the instruction of the boarders of the convent, the education of young people confided to their care, and the composition of those learned works which have given immortality both to themselves and to Port-Royal. The Logic of Arnauld, the rudimentary Greek and Latin treatises of Lancelot, the Ethics of Nicole, and the Ecclesiastical History of Le Nain de Tillemont, so often quoted by Gibbon, are instances of the useful and profound works which had their origin at Port-Royal.

In fact, Port-Royal became a famous school, where many statesmen as well as men of letters, of great subsequent celebrity, received their training. It was here that the great Racine was educated, and here were sown those seeds of virtue which so richly fructified in his mind: repressed for a time by the seductive flatteries of the world, they burst forth into light and vigor at a more advanced period of his career. Racine showed his deep sense of the benefits he had derived from Port Royal, not only by devoting various poems to the celebration of its many local beauties, its gardens, its fields, its waters and woods, but by writing a history of the convent itself, and also a memoir vindicating the name and fame of its inhabitants. The virtuous Pascal—*cet effrayant génie* (appalling genius), as Chateaubriand calls him—who had a sister and a niece in the establishment, enrolled himself in the band of Port-Royal anchorites, and although he had his permanent dwelling elsewhere, he remained in intimate relations with them up to the period of his death.

From the year 1648 to 1679, Port-Royal enjoyed its greatest celebrity, and stood at its highest point of utility. But its renown—its very merits, gradually led to its ruin, by exciting an envious and hostile spirit in other sections of the religious establishment of the country. But, above all, its friends and supporters, Pascal and Arnauld, had distinguished themselves by their opposition to the Jesuits, then the most powerful clerical body in France. Through these adverse agencies and influences, a blight fell on the prosperity of Port-Royal. The great men who had adorned it, died away one by one, and others were afraid or were forbidden to take their places and continue its fame. By various arbitrary means, the sisterhood became reduced to one-fourth of its original number, and was in part dispersed over the land.

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But the dastardly enmity of the party in power did not cease here: after many years of inveterate persecution, early one morning—on the 29th of October, 1709—a lieutenant of police, bearing a royal warrant and accompanied by three hundred gendarmes, as well as by various notaries and magistrates, came to the convent of Port-Royal, invested the building, took possession of the gates, caused all papers of every kind to be delivered up, and formally put them under seal. When this part of the commission was ended, he announced the further orders with which he was charged to the sisterhood. The inmates formed in all a band of fifteen poor females, inclusive of the superior, and seven lay or servant sisters. Without resistance, without protestation, without a murmur, they submitted themselves to their fate, chanting their accustomed closing services, while the men were driving them from their home. Some of them were so aged and infirm, that it was necessary to procure litters to take them away. They were conducted each to a different dwelling; the cruel enemies of Port-Royal had resolved that those poor wrecks of the illustrious convent should not even enjoy the consolation of weeping together.

But let it not be supposed that the enemies of Port-Royal were satisfied with the expulsion of every living being from within its walls. On the 22d of January 1710, another royal edict was issued, and its execution immediately followed. The venerable building was razed to the ground, with all the separate edifices which had been successively erected around it for its visitants and friends. The materials were sold—the destroyers of Port-Royal seemed desirous of effacing every trace of its foundations. Still, this was not sufficient. From the naked and desecrated spot there arose a hallowed atmosphere—a holy and fragrant savour, which was hateful to its implacable foes. The ashes of Lemaistre, Arnauld, Racine, and their kindred, yet lay there, and drew pilgrims to the scene. In 1711, the graves were opened; the mouldering bones of the illustrious dead were torn from their resting-places, and scattered here and there among the cemeteries of Paris and the adjoining villages. Such was the closing scene of the Port-Royal communion; it had incurred the implacable hostility of a bigoted court, whose vengeance was not to stop short even with the grave. There has always been something fiendish in the rancour of offended and absolute royalty.

Let us return to M. Sainte-Beuve's work. In giving the history of the convent, M. Sainte-Beuve enters into a detailed in-

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vestigation touching the genius of those who immortalized it, and respecting all who were in any way connected with its intellectual grandeur. Thus we find an admirable analysis of Corneille's principal tragedies—of *Polyeucte* especially, some of the best scenes of which were inspired by episodes in the history of Port-Royal. This is followed by admirable dissertations on Rotrou and Racine; by a masterly picture of Jansenius, as also of his austere friend, M. de Saint-Cyran, director of the convent, whose severity is contrasted with the pious and tender soul of Saint-François de Sales: an account of the director's dissensions with Saint-Vincent de Paule terminates the first volume. The three others that are to follow, will, no doubt, owing to the nature of the subject, and the multifarious researches they require, keep the public long expectant, the more so as the author acquaints us, that among the subjects of interest they are to treat, they will contain a full analysis of Jansenius and his doctrine, and biographical sketches of the immortal Pascal and of the great Arnauld.

M. Sainte-Beuve gives his reader a complete insight into the times and scenes which he describes. His descriptions are so vivid and graphic, that we almost fancy ourselves contemporaries of the recluses of Port-Royal, and feel as if we fully partook the sensations and emotions he so skilfully unfolds. So much calmness and energy is evinced by him at the same time, his sensibilities seem so pure and placid, that we at once abandon ourselves to his guidance with perfect security, because we are conscious of his good faith and superiority. M. Sainte-Beuve's reflections are always just and profound; perhaps his love of truth leads him sometimes to an over-abundance of details, and yet no one would like to curtail them; the excess itself is an exuberance that arouses in the reader's mind a greater number of ideas and sentiments; it forms, perhaps, the principal merit and greatest charm of Sainte-Beuve's work—it accustoms the thought to embrace a wider horizon. The historian of Port-Royal says, at the commencement of one of his chapters—"Men and things should always be regarded as near as possible; nothing can be traced definitively but in itself. What is seen from afar and in bulk, in greatness if you please, may be viewed properly, but also may be viewed improperly; we are quite sure respecting what we behold close at hand." It may be added, that such a study of detail, not only brings out particular objects in strong relief, but also tends to throw light on others of accessory interest, and on the *ensemble* of human affairs.

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By a singular coincidence, a German undertook, nearly about the same time as M. Sainte-Beuve, a history of Port-Royal, and published his first volume some months before the appearance of the French author's. The materials for such a work are numerous, and the task of the historian chiefly consists in exercising sagacity, taste, and discrimination in making his selections from the mass of memoirs and theological discussions bearing on the subject. This has been executed with success by the German historian, Dr. Hermann Reuchlin. We have seen the first volume of his *Geschichte von Port-Royal*, and a true German volume it is, containing eight or nine hundred pages, printed in close type and on wretched thin paper, subjecting the eyes to a grievous ordeal. It seems to contain even more details than that of M. Sainte-Beuve. The German author indulges in wide digressions, calculated to suit the inexhaustible patience and curiosity of German readers. But still his work is not so overloaded, as is too often the case in Germany, with a deluge of notes and quotations; it is always clear, interesting, and often poetical, as, for instance, in the description of Auvergne, the fatherland of the family of the Arnaulds. There is one reproach, however, to which Dr. Reuchlin is fairly obnoxious, and that is, of having failed to give sufficient unity to his work: he mixes too much, for example, the history of the Jesuits with that of the family of the Arnaulds, and blends confusedly the three distinct divisions of his subject—the picture of the times, of men, and of ideas. The spirit that animates Dr. Reuchlin throughout this laborious work is manifest from the very first pages. He is the enemy of the Jesuits, who represent in his eyes the blindest despotism in political as well as in religious matters; and, on the other hand, he is the enthusiastic admirer of the family of the Arnaulds, whom he considers as the representatives of liberty.

M. Gustave Planche is also the author of several volumes of *Portraits Littéraires*, which had previously appeared in the reviews. His criticisms form a complete contrast with those of M. Sainte-Beuve. The latter, ever mild, indulgent, and of refined taste, prefers to analyze the beauties of his hero; while the former is characterized by a kind of harsh impartiality and sternness, combined, however, with enlarged ideas, and a cold but elevated conception of poetry and the fine arts. M. Sainte-Beuve dwells on the merits, while M. Gustave Planche points out more especially the defects, of an author or a work. He has probably been led to this austere implacable criticism by

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the extravagant eulogiums which have been lavished on some of the celebrated literati of our time.

Several English names occur in the *Portraits Littéraires* of M. Gustave Planche, which naturally furnish objects of interest to an English reader. We find that the materials of many of these English criticisms have been taken from English sources not much known on the continent, and which have been so freely used by M. Planche as necessarily to save him much labor. The portrait of Fielding, especially, is, we will not say translated from that of Sir Walter Scott in the Lives of the Novelists, but so closely imitated, that if the English and French were put in close parallel, M. Gustave Planche would run the risk of hearing the epithet *plagiarist* applied to him by some vindictive contemporary, although it would be an unjust appellation, despite the imitation in this instance; for he is generally a very original critic. In the portrait of Henry Mackenzie, he awards praises that were natural forty years ago, but which, we believe, few modern readers would be disposed to re-echo; in that of Maturin, he manifests the highest esteem for works which in England are almost fallen into oblivion. M. Planche ranks *Melmoth* and *Bertram* on the same level with *Faust* and *Manfred:* he is not the first continental critic who has wandered so far astray. Maturin wrote, we believe, in a great measure for the sake of writing; his imagination hurried him into extravagances and aberrations; he collected all the limbs and appurtenances of strength and beauty, and, huddling them together inartificially, formed from them a monster. Coleridge formerly criticised *Bertram* with great talent; he detected the germ of *Bertram* in the *Robbers* of Schiller; and although there is little similarity in the development of the two plays, it cannot be denied that a strong analogy exists: but Coleridge was too severe on Maturin, and withheld from him the scanty meed of approbation unquestionably due.

There is a popular and celebrated English author of the present day, who has had the fortune to propitiate M. Gustave Planche's good graces, albeit M. Planche is particularly bitter against living literati: we mean the author of *Pelham* and *Eugene Aram.* The French critic falls into the common error and fashion of identifying the author with the hero: no doubt, a certain degree of identity may sometimes exist between an author and an imaginary hero, but the idea is carried too far: it was thus with Byron, because the poet loved the creature of his imagination, and invested him (Childe Harold in particular) with

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much of his own feelings and reminiscences. M. Planche reviews *Pelham* more as if it were a biography than a fiction; instead of seeing in the hero a mere personification of English aristocratic exclusiveness, drawn with a satirical design, and as effective for its purpose as if it had been sketched by Juvenal or Molière. M. Planche afterwards proceeds to examine *Eugene Aram*, and does so in strains of admiration, highly appropriate, no doubt, but which his pen is not accustomed to trace. "*Eugene Aram*," he says, "is, next to *Pelham*, the most important of the author's works. It is a poem at once marvellous and pathetic—a village tragedy, in which the actors are few, and derive no celebrity or lustre from their social rank; but it is a tragedy, so full, so rapid, so rich in terrors and in tears, that Euripides and Sophocles would not have disavowed it. This production is assuredly the result of long meditation." This high eulogium will doubtless be approved by the majority of readers; but it is proper to state that some change must have been wrought in the feelings of M. Gustave Planche towards Sir E. L. Bulwer, for he has lately written on *Ernest Maltravers* and *Alice* with the severity, the bold and often paradoxical logic, that usually characterize his criticisms.

The literature of France and the domain of criticism have lately been enriched by the publication of a *Histoire Littéraire de la France avant le Douzième Siècle*, in three volumes, by M. Ampère, son of the illustrious mathematician. This literary history was partially known to the Parisian public previous to its laborious revision and publication, from its contents having been delivered in the form of lectures at the *Collège de France*. It belongs, by the profundity of its views, to that philosophical criticism we have spoken of relatively to M. Villemain. It may be inferred from the title that the subject is not one of very great attraction for the generality of readers: it professes to treat of the literature of France before the twelfth century—at a time when, we may say, there was no literature, no French language, and even no France. But those to whom this may appear strange and anomalous, will be perhaps surprised to learn, that the Benedictines, long before M. Ampère, had partly performed the same task, in twelve volumes, under the same title. Those learned anchorites were the first to understand that a knowledge of the various literary efforts made on the soil of Gaul was essential to the due appreciation of the literature properly called French—showing its cradle—the primitive elements that brought it slowly and laboriously to the confused and complex state it presents during

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the middle ages. M. Ampère has made ample use of the work of the Benedictines, added new researches to theirs, and distinguished his labors by a comprehensive survey of the succession and mass of facts, which is preferable to the minute annotation of details by the learned ascetics. Although the work of the Benedictines is in twelve volumes, and that of M. Ampère in three only, it would be great injustice to the latter to consider his three volumes as a mere abridgment. The title is the chief point of similarity that exists between the two works. The object and views of M. Ampère are of a higher order: true, he has erected a beautiful edifice on the substantial basis left by the Benedictines, but he has written the history of the human mind rather than that of its works. His is more the history of ideas and of society, than that of books and letters; he has fulfilled his task rather as a philosopher and an historian than as a mere critic.

Nevertheless, M. Ampère in seeking to illumine the chaotic obscurity of that period, seems to us to waste too many comments on its feeble literary productions, to which he attaches a merit and importance that will de denied by many: he consoles himself too easily, and even cheerfully, for the ruin of the true classical literature, when he dwells on the partial rays of intellectual light that shot through the dark ages; he scarcely seems to deplore the decline of the great Augustan literature, while he is hailing with enthusiasm that Christian intellectual development which rose upon the ruins of the profane literary world. He carefully analyzes the poets, grammarians, and rhetoricians of those ages of darkness, and then examines the doctors and apostles of the new faith—Lactantius, Paulinus, Severus Ambrosius, and many others. These names undoubtedly deserve to occupy a prominent and glorious place in the pages of ecclesiastical history, but we doubt their claims to appear in a literary history. M. Ampère gives us a catalogue of their writings, all theological hymns, homilies, and legends; which productions were, it is well known, of great value in their time, but they have no pretensions to any literary excellence. And yet the authors of that period are highly eulogized by the professor, while he views with indifference the oblivion into which their classical predecessors had sunk: although he certainly cannot, nor can any one else, think that Lactantius and St. Ambrosius are in any way fit to replace Cicero, or St. Avitus, Virgil! We, for our own part, are very far from sharing the enthusiasm of M. Ampère for that literature, which, so early as the third cen-

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tury, as he says, had consoled humanity for all its disasters, and eclipsed the earlier literature. But, if it were so, we would ask, why has it not taken a more extensive flight?—why has it not remained the admiration of men? How is it that, ten centuries after the tempest which annihilated antiquity, Europe greeted with transports its glorious resurrection? How is it that its remains, torn from oblivion, are hailed and received with adoration by nations?—and how is it that all literary and intellectual light ceased with it, and reappeared only when it began to revive?

We will not omit to remark of M. Ampère's work, as it may perhaps be interesting to philologists, that its more original and curious part is that which treats of the influence on the formation of the French language exercised by the Latin, German, Celtic, and other tongues. He gives on the subject a multitude of instructive details; and although objections might sometimes be started to many of his etymologies, they would not impair the unquestionable merit and utility of this branch of his labors. In August, 1840, the section of the Royal Institute, called *Académie des Inscriptions and Belles-lettres*, awarded to him a prize, which will be deemed amply deserved by those who peruse his work.

Among the critics of secondary importance, we find the great writer, whose influence on the nineteenth century has been already recorded—M. de Chateaubriand. He belongs to the class of modern critics by his "Essay on English Literature;" but he has in no degree followed the progress of modern criticism. This is probably owing to a feeling of scorn on the part of the illustrious author, for these two volumes or essays are replete with eloquent rancor against the literary movement of our time, and against some of its most distinguished promoters. The pen of M. de Chateaubriand traces in this work some very beautiful pages on Milton, but on points known to all; it then becomes singularly excursive, and sundry chapters are produced altogether devoid of connection and bearing. The merits of Chaucer are discussed and dismissed in a few lines; those of Spenser are treated with similar lack of ceremony. Several passages on Shakspeare are certainly very fine, although the chapter on the great bard is sadly incomplete. All contemporary poets are neglected or omitted, with the exception of Byron and Beattie; the former is judged with excessive frigidity. Meanwhile, M. de Chateaubriand considers it fitting to find space in these essays for a long, paradoxical dissertation on Luther, and for strange digressions on M. de Lamennais, Captain Ross, etc. At the

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close of the work he devotes a chapter to the state of his own feelings—tinged with that deep gloom, and full of those expressions of bitter discouragement, which we have stated elsewhere are to be met with in all his works. This melancholy and lassitude are both affecting and inexplicable in one who has been so much and so long the favorite of fortune and of his country.

Another work appeared five years ago on English literature, entitled "History of English Literature from Bacon to the present Time," by M. Mezières: but this title is a complete deception; the work merely contains sketches of the principal prose-writers of England, and various passages from their works, ably translated.

To conclude the list of the principal critics of France we have now but very few names more to mention, after which we will devote a few words to the superficial, passionate, mercenary criticism of the periodical press. M. Lerminier, in his *Etudes d'Histoire et de Philosophie*, has touched some of the most lofty points of criticism. His characteristic divisions of historians are ingenious: he considers Herodotus the historian of traditions—Thucydides the grave historian, *par excellence*—Sallust the historian of political parties and factions—and Tacitus the historian who unites the ancient and the modern world; his plan is to sketch, within the brief compass of two volumes, a synthetic review of the history of the human race. He has contended for the parallel development of faith and intellect, religion and philosophy, amongst mankind. In the second volume there is an excellent dissertation, entitled "Legislative Systems Compared," which deserves to be read with attention by all political inquirers. M. Lerminier's preceding work, "Philosophical Letters addressed to a Citizen of Berlin," had not the same importance: it was published in 1832, and gave an outline of the political state of that period. He subsequently published his "Beyond the Rhine" (*Au dela du Rhin*), after a very short excursion in Germany. It was on occasion of this latter work that the author, generally treated with great severity by the reviewers, was spoken of with unjustifiable asperity. The book is truly a superficial one, indeed it could scarcely be more so, and consequently affords ample scope for satire; but no defect, we hold, can justify personal abuse and insult; criticism is thereby degraded and rendered abhorrent to minds of delicacy and feeling. The noblest province of the critic is to detect and analyze beauties; and a book destitute of claims to commendation is not worth criticising. The exposition of faults and blemishes should be deemed an ungrate-

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ful task, and kept in the back-ground, merely to shade the more brilliant coloring.

Germany has been studied with greater perseverance and success by many others. The youthful generation of our time is aware that immense treasures of thought and learning are to be found in that inexhaustible mine. M. Saint-Marc Girardin, the talented and ever-sprightly professor of French literature at the Sorbonne (faculty of letters), has given to the public a collection of sketches of the highest order in his *Allemagne;* M. Alfred Michiels has done the same in his *Etudes sur l'Allemagne;* as likewise M. Edgar Quinet. We have a very good history of German literature by Lagrange, another by Peschier; a treatise on the Germanic literature of the middle ages by M. Eicchof, and many other partial studies on the same subject. The historian De Barante has produced a faithful translation of Schiller. Goethe is also ably translated by various German scholars: M. Henri Blaze has given the best version of Faust in French, and M. X. Marmier—whose invaluable researches on the literature of Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland, are so highly and justly esteemed, besides his too succinct work, entitled *Etudes sur Goethe*—has admirably rendered the whole of the immortal poet's plays. Every work of importance that now appears in Germany is immediately translated in Paris. There have been of late years, moreover, some excellent historical treatises on other literatures—on that of Spain by M. Louis Viardot, and on that of Portugal by M. Ferdinand Denis. As to English literature, it is needless to say that every remarkable production is immediately translated in Paris, and the English text reprinted at least twice.

But we must not omit to add, that M. Victor Hugo deserves a place among the critics of the nineteenth century from the prefaces to his works. That prefixed to *Cromwell*, especially, is remarkable for the boldness of its views; unfortunately, they are generally expressed in a style straining too much after effect, and so full of antitheses and affectation, that they frequently become incomprehensible and fatiguing to the sense. He discerns three great phases in the history of poetry—lyric poetry, epic poetry, and dramatic poetry. He says that the East represents the lyric poetry; the Greek and Roman sphere, the epic; and the modern world, the dramatic. To this theory of Victor Hugo it was objected that the epic muse had been heard in the East, and the lyric in Greece. But the poet's position is not materially affected thereby; for it is by predominant characteristics

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that such an allocation is to be judged. Thus, for instance, is not the Bible principally lyrical, although it contains all species of beauties?—can it be denied that Homer is the god and life of Greece, and Shakspeare the presiding genius of the modern world? Yet we behold rising before us the stern figure of Dante; in what category shall we class his gigantic spirit? He must stand alone, in solitary grandeur; his poetical form is not to be imitated; it is an emanation peculiar to the spirit of times steeped in the misery of civil wars, and covered with the gloom of superstitious terrors, as in the fourteenth century—a dark and dreary era of priestly domination.

Victor Hugo, furthermore, in a volume entitled, *Littérature et Philosophie Mêlées*, seeks an opportunity to indulge the now prevailing literary mania of depreciating Voltaire, of denying him all but the slenderest claims to intellectual capacity, and of assailing his memory with gross and preposterous vituperation; and all this with an affectation of superiority, which must be generally offensive. M. Saint-Marc Girardin, we are rejoiced to notice, has rendered considerable service to good taste by lecturing, during one entire year, solely on Voltaire, under a literary point of view only, and by instituting parallels between some of his works and those on similar subjects by contemporaries, wherein the latter generally made but a sorry appearance, and were sometimes totally eclipsed on comparison.

We now come to the criticism of the French periodical press, which, we are concerned to state, is at a very low ebb. It has hitherto been found impracticable to maintain a French review on the plan of the best English reviews, for which we cannot well account. It may be that the impossibility arises from the public mind in France being too versatile and transient, and from parties and opinions undergoing such rapid and frequent changes and modifications. It is probable that as politics chiefly engross the attention of the nation, the critical notices on new works inserted in the newspapers, which are notoriously dictated by unworthy motives, sordid, party, or personal, satisfy the mass of readers. The *Revue Encyclopédique*, established by M. Julien de Paris, succeeded during several years, but eventually fell when its creator passed it to other hands. M. Guizot and the Duke de Broglie tried a fair experiment in 1829: they established the *Revue Française*, in which their political, critical, and philosophical doctrines were developed and applied with remarkable ability: but it did not last long; it sunk for want of support; and a recent attempt to revive it received so little encour-

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agement, that it has again ceased to appear. The *Revue Trimestrielle* was also well conducted, but soon ceased. We are justified in affirming that the only reviews which possess the recommendation of long standing and general popularity, are the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the *Revue de Paris*, and they are published more in the form of the English magazines than of the great reviews. And yet scarcely a year passes but painful efforts to establish new critical periodicals are witnessed, which invariably prove abortive; the puny productions perish for lack of sustenance after the most ephemeral of existences. One exception, however, must be noted in favor of the *Revue des Progrès*, which is edited with powerful energy by M. Louis Blanc; it has drawn the attention of the French public by the strong democratic principles it upholds, the bold tenets it has avowed in the face of the world, and the host of superior men who cooperate in its publication.

The *Revue de Paris* is a weekly journal, containing critical notices, light tales, and worldly chit-chat, always elegant and sprightly in tone and matter, and especially calculated to beguile the leisure hours of the boudoir. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* frequently gives masterly pieces of criticism; such are the articles of De Carné, Saint-Beuve, Mignet, Marmier, Lerminier, Chasles, Charles Magnin, and others. The last-named gentleman, who is one of the curators of the Royal Library in Paris, has devoted many years of his laborious life to a branch of classical investigation which had not previously, we believe, occupied the exclusive attention of any scholar. The title of his work explains its object; it is styled *Origines du Théatre*, and has only recently been terminated. We cannot enter into its merits, but may repeat with regard to it what we have said in other cases, namely, that it is one of those works which reflect equal honor on the country and the author. M. Magnin has treated the subject with great capacity and taste, and combined indefatigable perseverance with profound erudition.

With respect to reviews, we have specified the only two that have had any standing and permanency of merit. As to the monthly review called *Journal des Savants*, it would be a gross error to rank it among the ordinary periodicals of any country. It is, in fact, a review of the highest order, but at once private and national; it only notices works of the first merit and utility; it is printed by the royal press, and the committee of authors who prepare its articles is composed of sixteen members belonging to the various sections of the Royal Institute. It is in the

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Journal des Savants that the admirable classical dissertations of Letronne and Burnouf, the valuable scientific investigations of Biot and Libri, the philosophical literary analyses of Cousin and Villemain, are to be found.

It is generally believed in England, that all the pieces of political or literary criticism being invariably signed in France, they are necessarily regarded as the mere opinion of an individual, and exercise no influence beyond what is derived from the name of the writer. This idea is quite erroneous; or if it be true at all, has reference only to the reviews, and we have seen that there are but two reviews in France of anything like established reputation; but, in fact, the principal pieces of political and literary criticism, those that exercise the greatest influence, are met with in the columns of the daily press, in the accredited organs of parties and sections of parties, where most articles are signed, or their authors, at all events, well known. In truth, anonymous invectives would not be tolerated in France; they are opposed to the manners and feelings of the country, and it would be perhaps desirable that the same system and custom were followed in England, since it might check many abusive pens in their slanderous course. And, after all, it does not appear that the fact of the articles being unsigned gives a greater character of unity to the review; for we have sometimes found in the *Edinburgh Review* articles animated by anything but a liberal spirit, and others in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and even the *Quarterly*, tinged with ideas more liberal than could be expected from the general tone of those publications. In France, a Junius stabbing in the dark could not be found. When the undaunted Armand Carrel was at the head of the *National*, and it became under his auspices the most formidable and eloquent supporter of liberty, he daily lashed the government and individuals with a bitterness and vigor unsurpassed by Junius himself; but Armand Carrel ever struck with his breast uncovered—open to the fury and attacks of the assailed party.

In France the press is essentially the organ of party and opinion; it is the great and sole arena of discussion after the Chambers; it generally preserves a tone of reserve and dignity, and never descends to personalities and gross language; the only newspaper that has of late years indulged in such excesses, the *Presse*, has incurred public reprobation. In England most topics are discussed at public meetings and dinners—over wine; and a newspaper is more of a commercial speculation. In France, the influence of newspapers is immense; they repeatedly over-

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throw ministries; they were the great instruments in promoting the revolution of July; in short, they dictate public opinion, while in England they embody it, and secure influence only as they obey and follow it. The leading article in a French paper is the most attractive part to a reader; in an English paper it is often merely glançed at or disregarded altogether. In France, very few newspapers make money, and those that do so are not worth many years' purchase. The *Journal des Débats* is perhaps the only one. The public in the interior of France reads very little; Paris, it is well known, is the whole of France; newsrooms are established in every corner of that city, and the necessity of individual subscriptions is thereby obviated, even if people had the money to spare. Advertisements are also very limited. Now, in England things are upon a very different footing, since there it is notorious that newspapers are an enormous source of profit and wealth. Very slight consideration is sufficient to show that the regular returns of most of the Paris newspapers must be inadequate to their support. They have a large sum (*cautionnement*) to deposit in the hands of government; most are now sold at a reduced price since the establishment of the *Presse* at forty francs per annum, or they have increased their bulk, which equally reduces the profits; the *Courrier Français* is the only exception. There is a stamp of a *sou* to pay on each newspaper; a single number sells for but four sous; and what with the cost of management and of printing, the interest on capital, the remunerations to writers, etc., there seldom remains enough to meet the current expenditure.

The newspaper that has hitherto been most celebrated for its literary criticisms is the *Journal des Débats;* we say hitherto, because it has now adopted the silly custom introduced by some and followed by all, of filling the space not occupied by politics with fragments of novels, continued from day to day; it has, therefore, received a number of novelists among its contributors, and almost every day shreds and patches of romances are offered to the public, instead of the excellent literary and scientific articles of MM. Saint-Marc Girardin, Delécluze, Michel Chevalier, Chasles, Alloury, and others, formerly so frequent and now so rare. The noted and sprightly *feuilletons* of M. Jules Janin, on the theatrical movements of the metropolis, have alone remained untouched; and they, we think, might have been advantageously curtailed; for such incessant effusions of mercenary wit necessarily flag at times and become wretchedly insipid. This fashion of introducing novels piece-meal into the

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daily press, likewise affords facilities for imposing upon the public: after their publication in the newspapers, they are frequently republished under different titles, and thus stale merchandize is constantly palmed upon the community.

The *National*, established in 1825 for the avowed object of accelerating the fall of the old state of things, by Armand Carrel, Mignet, and Thiers, gave for many years some very good critical articles; and even now, notwithstanding its decline since the death of Armand Carrel, it often contains some very able papers. The *Constitutionnel*, at one time so flourishing, afterwards so depressed, is now rising again under the direction of new editors. The *Presse* was established in 1836 by M. Emile de Girardin. Certain matters connected with this paper, and some works of compilation, which drew upon him an odious accusation, have left a stigma upon the name of Girardin, and he has been expelled from the Chamber of Deputies. Such is the man whose hand deprived France of Armand Carrel, a model of intellectual vigor and political integrity, but too easily led to descend from the lofty position to which his talents and virtues had raised him. The political part of the *Presse* is blindly devoted to the advocacy of prerogative, and is virulently hostile to the democratic spirit of the age; violence and invective are mistaken by its editors for argument and eloquence. The literary part is often very original in the hands of M. Theophile Gauthier, and in those of M. Granier de Cassagnac, who has distinguished himself by his bold, dashing, paradoxical literary criticisms, and by two works, from which much of new and valuable historical information may be gathered: they are, his *History of the Operative Classes*, and the *History of the Noble and Ennobled Classes.*

The principal opposition papers are, besides the *National* and the *Constitutionnel*, the *Siècle*, said to be under the control of M. Odilon Barrot, which enjoys a very extensive circulation, and the *Courrier Français*, in which the political part displays high talents, and the historical and literary criticisms of M. Buret, are of the first order. Among the legitimist newspapers, there are only two deserving of notice; the *Quotidienne*, founded by Michaud, the historian of the Crusades, the imbecility of which goes on increasing every day; and the *Gazette de France*, the only paper of that party which possesses any merit; its literary articles and critiques, by M. Nettement, are clever, and by no means so generally known and esteemed as they deserve.

In England, the editor of a paper is more a man of business;

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in France, he is a man of the world, an important character both in the political sphere and in society. But, unhappily, a foul stigma rests on the French press, from which we believe the English is free, namely, that in France a paper is frequently bought up, bribed, and silenced, by government. There are in Paris agents (*agents littéraires*) connected with the papers and reviews, or with a certain number of them, who will bargain for articles of any kind, and sell encomiums at so much per line, which explains why in France so many contemptible works are praised by the public press; it is because the agent has been well paid for himself and for the author of the articles, and thus the public is grossly deceived by impostors and mercenary writers. Send a work in France to any newspaper or review, it will not be faithfully reviewed as in England; no! it will scarcely be noticed, unless the author belong to some *côterie*, or apply to some influential member of one, or to an agent, but especially unless he pays them all.

In France, the absorbing object of a journal is politics; the literary sphere is altogether subordinate. A man in Paris rises to notoriety through the columns of a newspaper; he affects opposition, and, when he finds the moment propitious, he yields his principles, and steps into a good place; or he skilfully adopts a line of politics which he knows will be successful, and he is then yet more amply rewarded; or if he is in favor with the king and his ministers, he has only to flatter them, like the Hindoos their idols in the pagodas, and favors will shower thickly upon him. There are exceptions, doubtless, but very few; the *National* and the *Courrier Français*, for instance, have always remained inexorable and incorruptible; but they, on the other hand, go too far; instead of confining themselves to broad constitutional principles, they find fault with everything. The political writers of a French newspaper form a body distinct from the literary writers, and in each capacity they are generally very numerous. The greatest ambition of a French youth is to write something for a newspaper: a young Frenchman is as proud of having written a tolerable article for a journal, as a young Englishman of having said something in parliament—no matter what. This arises from the difference of education.

In England, a boy is kept strictly to classical studies in public schools, especially in those attended by youths of the higher class, and is eventually sent to one of the universities, where he either wastes his time in dissipation, or exerts his utmost powers to obtain a fellowship, and his readings for the purpose are extremely

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exclusive, as is well known. In France, the system of education is totally different: every branch of it is comprehended in a single organization, superintended by the Minister of Public Instruction. Nothing can be more ridiculous than to hear people talk of the University of Paris, or call themselves members of the University of Paris. Such an university does not exist; there is but one in the kingdom, and it is the *Université Royale de France*, which extends its ramifications through every part of the country. It consists of various colleges, of which fifty-five are royal colleges (five in Paris), and about four hundred *collèges communaux*, of an inferior order, partly supported by different localities. All private schools, besides, of whatever description, as well as the primary instruction given to the lower class, are under the immediate jurisdiction of the University of France, its minister, council, and inspectors.

The studies in those colleges continue until the age of seventeen or eighteen usually, but they are not confined to the classics; science and the modern languages are taught at the same time, and peculiar attention is paid to the French language itself, to diction and elocution. When a student, therefore, reaches his last two years of collegiate education, one of which is devoted to rhetoric and the other to metaphysics, he becomes a great adept in literary discussion; the high and solemn prizes which are every year awarded to the best compositions, excite his emulation; that literary enthusiasm, so characteristic of the nation, warms gradually, until his greatest ambition is to see himself in print. Moreover a French youth is unique for his proneness, in general, to all literary and political discussions.

The University of France is also subdivided into twenty-seven *académies*, which include several departments, with all their colleges, faculties, and schools. Each *académie* has its chief seat in one of the principal towns, where reside a rector, inspectors, etc.; in short, a whole local administration. There are twelve towns in France that have faculties either of theology, law, medicine, or letters; some of them have all those faculties, or the greater part of them; in all which faculties the lectures are public and gratuitous, being intended for the benefit of the youths who have entered business after leaving college, and of the public at large. An indispensable requisite for a French student, on leaving any of the colleges or schools, is to take the degree of bachelor of arts. This degree *must* be obtained previous to entering any school of law or medicine, or any of the great military schools, or others where higher special degrees are con-

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ferred, as that of licentiate, and afterwards that of doctor in the two first named. The examinations for this degree of bachelor of arts, called *bachelier ès lettres*, have lately been materially altered, and rendered infinitely more strict than was formerly the case; indeed, they may now be reproached with embracing too many branches of knowledge, so that superficiality is too often engendered. Since the necessity of acquiring this degree is so imperative, it would be harsh if preliminary residence in the college itself, or in any particular school, were required; consequently there are eighteen *chefs-lieux d'académies*, where committees are established and sit at various periods of the year for the examination of those who wish to obtain the degree; and any one, from whatever part of the world he may come, is entitled to present himself and have the degree and diploma conferred upon him, if his examination be satisfactory. So much for French education. What we have said will give one an idea of the system; but we must add that the *Ecole de Droit* (the School of Law) is usually resorted to for the complement of education by all those who are not destined to any special pursuit, medical, military, or commercial. In fact no one is competent to enter any branch of diplomacy, however subordinate, without having graduated at the *Ecole de Droit;* and thus it happens that the higher classes of Frenchmen generally possess a more intimate knowledge of the laws and constitution of their country than the same classes in any other nation.

We cannot close this rapid sketch of the state of criticism in France, without casting a glance on classical or scholastic criticism; the more especially, as a few words on the subject will suffice to give an insight into the state and prospects of this branch of literature on the other side of the channel. France, during the sixteenth century, derived great lustre from the beautiful editions of the Greek authors then published by Estienne, Casaubon, and many other distinguished scholars; but from that time until the present period no collection worthy of those renowned scholiasts had appeared, to testify or stimulate the reaction which has arisen in favor of that unapproachable literature. At present, however, a vast undertaking, perhaps the most complete that has yet been attempted, is in progress, which promises to reflect infinite credit on the house of Didots, the eminent publishers, who have conferred so many benefits on the votaries of classical learning. This collection, entitled *Bibliothèque des Classiques Grecs*, with a Latin translation annexed to the text, is edited on the principle of rendering tributary to its

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embellishment and perfection the treasures of erudition amassed not only in France, but in England, Germany, and Italy. The annotations, emendations, and investigations of all the great scholars of Europe, are here collated with admirable sagacity and discrimination. A similar undertaking for the Latin classics although not nearly so comprehensive and extended in learned researches, was achieved several years ago by the bookseller Pancouke; his *Bibliotheque Latine Française* is generally esteemed, although many of its translations are undeserving the reputation of the collection.

France can boast a brilliant luminary in classical and archæological learning, in the person of M. Letronne, the greatest antiquarian scholar of our time, who has shed abundant streams of light on the history of Egypt and Greece, and on other dark and remote portions of ancient history. His *Paléographie Egyptienne* is an invaluable work; indeed, all that emanates from his comprehensive mind, even to the smallest note, is singularly instrumental in elucidating what was previously obscure and inexplicable. All those who are acquainted with his annotations and topographical observations on Herodotus, which are now annexed to the valuable translation of Count Miot de Melito, must share the admiration of the learned world for the illustrious and modest scholar. It may be observed that this new translation of Herodotus has completely thrown that of Larcher into the shade. Count Miot de Melito has consulted all the German commentators and translators, and whenever his version differs from that of the German Jacobi or of the English Beloe, he never omits to give the sense adopted by those authors. French literature is also indebted to Count Miot for the best translation of Diodorus Siculus that has yet been given, which is enriched with excellent critical observations, and with the fragments, translated for the first time, discovered by the celebrated Angelo Maïo, formerly librarian to the Vatican, and now a cardinal. Among the recent remarkable translations, we must not omit to notice that of Hippocrates by Littré of the Institute, a splendid monument to the medical knowledge of the ancients.

M. Boissonade is also one of the most profound Greek scholars of the nineteenth century; his researches on Homer and on Greek literature in general, are inestimable. Although a new translation of Aristotle by Thurot is in existence, M. Barth. lemy Saint-Hilaire, Professor of Greek Philosophy in the *Collège de France*, has undertaken another translation, and, together with M. Ravaisson and M. Vacherot, has written divers memoirs on

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the philosopher of Stagyra, which have been crowned by the Royal Institute.

Our age has also witnessed the best translation of Homer in the French language: it is by Dugat-Montbel; the text followed is judiciously adopted from the versions of Wolf and Boissonade; the translation is in prose, and is embellished by sundry valuable annotations, illustrative of ancient and modern criticism, in which Knight's profound investigations are especially discussed and analyzed. The Marquis de Fortia has also produced an excellent critical-biographical dissertation on Homer and Xenophon. The noble marquis, who is one of the most venerable worshippers of science in Europe, has recently published a work on China, the result of many years' assiduous labor. We have likewise seen of late years Æschylus ably translated and commented by Biard, Sophocles by M. Artaud, Plato by M. Cousin. The publishers, Didots, are also accomplished scholars, and the authors of an excellent translation of Thucydides and Theocritus. Finally, among the eminent productions of our time on classical subjects, we must not omit the work of M. Ozanaux, Inspector-General of the University, on the *Institutions Religieuses, Sociales, et Politiques, de la République Romaine;* the work entitled *Economie Politique des Romains*, by M. Dureau de Lamalle, author of the best French version of Tacitus; and the volume of M. Leclerc, Dean of the Faculty of Letters of Paris, *Des Journaux chez les Romains.*

We have seen that criticism in France has been, and is, the pursuit of some of the superior intellects that adorn the present age; yet it bears traces of frailty and want of depth. With the exception of a few eminent men, who cannot be easily imitated, criticism is in the hands of a host of writers who are affected by the moral disease of our time, we mean the want of deep faith and feeling. It is not uncommon to hear it affirmed by the present generation, that imagination can easily supply the place of faith. There cannot be a grosser or more vulgar error; it is the source, the paramount cause, of so many abortive productions. True greatness is based on consciousness. It has been observed, that the disorderly excesses of Michael Angelo and Raphael evince a total absence of faith and consciousness, and yet how great they were! But this is a deception; they merely prove the inconsistency of man: we all feel it in the depths of our heart. This inconsistency is less in our intellect than in the duality of our nature; and the lives and works of those two gigantic geniuses are instances of it. Shakspeare, no doubt, at one period

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of his life, put implicit faith in love, ambition, and glory; he nevertheless passed from one faith to another in the gradation of his years. Corneille believed in heroism when he wrote his *Horaces*. In short, faith and consciousness are the great unfathomable sources of inspiration for all that is noble and sublime. All those whose intellect has a proneness to creation, but who are deprived of the aid of this divine grace, can never attain excellence. The want of consciousness is the leprosy of our time; but the malady will be transient. We have more than once spoken of the conquests of Christianity; it will purify the human heart; even criticism will rise exalted, pure, and strong, through it. This is no paradox. We have spoken of the state of criticism in France; and in England also, we find that, in its more popular departments at least, it has fallen of late years into lamentable degradation. But, we contend, the polemical, fault-finding, superficial, and shallow criticism of this analytic age, cannot last; it must and will give place to a deep and true spirit of synthetic exposition, founded on feeling, faith, and consciousness.

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CHAPTER SIXTH.

HISTORY.

Importance of Historical Studies.—Schelling's Definition of History.—Nullity of the former Historians of France.—First Historical Works of M. Augustin Thierry—his History of the Conquest of England by the Normans—his *Dix Ans d'Etudes Historiques*.—M. Amédée Thierry.—M. Guizot.—M. Augustin Thierry's Account of M. Guizot's Historical Labors.—M. Guizot's Essays on the History of France—his Diffusion of Historical Studies.—Collections of Historical Memoirs and Chronicles relating to the History of France.—M. Guizot's Lectures on European Civilization and on Civilization in France—his Life of Shakspeare—his History of the English Revolution in 1649—its Merits.—M. de Sismondi—his History of Italian Republics in the Middle Ages—his *Histoire des Français*—Merits and Defects of the Work.—Dulaure's History of Paris.—M. Alexis Monteil's *Histoire des Français des divers Etats*.—Principles of the Fatalist School of Historians.—M. Mignet.—M. Thiers.—Other Works on the French Revolution by Lacretelle, Tissot, Eugène Labaume, Montgaillard, Viscount Cony, and De Norvins.—Parliamentary History of the French Revolution by Buchez and Roux.—M. Bignon's History of France under Napoleon.—M. de Chateaubriand's *Etudes Historiques*.—M. Michelet—his Memoirs of Vico—his History of Rome—his Memoirs of Luther.—Histories of Luther by Merle D'Aubigné and Audin.—Character of M. Michelet's History of France.—Glowing Style and Poetical Spirit of that Historian.—M. Salvador—his *Jesus Christ et sa Doctrine*.—"Life of Jesus," by Dr. Strauss.—Character of M. Salvador's Work.—Religious Investigation.

THE regeneration of history, accompanied by a general tendency towards historical studies, is one of the most prominent and agreeable features of modern France. History, whose scope is so vast, comprehensive, and philosophical, created, we may say, and fertilized by the learning of the nineteenth century, becomes a study of paramount importance in connection with the progressive ideas and high civilization of the present epoch. An intimate knowledge of past events, especially of the history of human intellect, is the primary condition on which the happiness of humanity and the perfection of future ages must depend. History aspires in our time to be the herald of peace and perfectibility among men, and the grandeur of that mission will be exalted with the course of time. We think Schelling's allegorical definition of history, in his *Philosophy and Religion*, a peculiarly solemn and profound expression of the science. "History," he says, "is an epic conceived in the spirit of God; its two parts are the movement by which humanity leaves its centre to ex-

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pand to its utmost development, and the other the movement that effectuates the return. The first part is like the Iliad of history, the second is its Odyssey; the first movement is centrifugal, and the second centripetal."

The French nation, previous to the nineteenth century, was singularly ignorant of its own history: the little that was known of its earlier existence was united with a large amount of error. Historians had mingled epochs and races in the strangest medley of confusion; they had left unexplained, because they were incapable of understanding, the origin and growth of France as a nation—evincing an insane contempt for the invaluable chronicles of the middle ages, whenever they condescended to consult them, and drawing from them a mere frigid, shallow narrative, destitute of all historical charm and interest. History being thus lifeless, thus devoid of truth and animation, it was naturally incapable of exercising any influence or power over the intellectual development of the nation. The celebrated Augustin Thierry was one of the first to mark, in his admirable *Lettres sur l'Histoire de France*, the extraordinary dullness and incapacity of the French writers who had undertaken to unfold the annals of the country. He proves to demonstration the nullity of the historical labors of Mezeray, Daniel, Velly, and Anquetil—their complete ignorance of the facts they have related, mistaking constantly one tribe for another—despising the chronicles, though these were the sole sources from which they could derive information, and ever neglecting to delineate the characteristics of the sovereigns, but, above all, those of the people. These were subjects far above their capacity and understanding. This ignorance of the historians and of the nation respecting its own history, has, we believe, been productive of fatal consequences to the French people; for a sound knowledge of the past is eminently adapted to calm that impetuosity wherewith men of ardent temperaments rush towards a visionary future. What can be better calculated than an accurate conception of history to convince mankind that each epoch has its assigned place in the gradual advancement of society?—that the progress of good is necessarily slow, and that it is madness to suppose a nation and its nature can undergo a fundamental change within a brief interval? The ignorance of national history exposed the people to receive as completely new, various political theories that had often been studied and tried; it, moreover, misled them into a false and ridiculous enthusiasm.

The above consideration explains the perseverance and zeal

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which the French historians of the present century have manifested in reconstructing the national history. They all strive towards the same point. M. Augustin Thierry has thus noticed the fact, in his Dissertation on the History of France prefixed to his *Recits des Temps Mérovingiens*: — "There has arisen," he says, "in the nineteenth century, a new historical school; such is the name that has been given to it, although, in sober truth, there is no school, for there is neither master nor scholars, doctrine nor votaries, but a variety of minds, methods, and researches, and in this variety, remarkable to say, a strong analogy in instincts, tendency, and aim. With all, the common object is to grapple with fundamental problems, and to fix definitely the bases of our national history."

The most celebrated reformers of the national history of France are Guizot, Augustin Thierry, Sismondi, and Dulaure. The works of the last, it is true, have reference only to the metropolis, but they have nevertheless greatly elucidated the national progress. We may also place by his side another historian, whose labors are less known to the public at large, M. Alexis Monteil, author of the *Histoire des Français des divers Etats*, who has evinced a very remarkable industry in historical researches, combined with high attainments: his views are bold and novel, and have exercised on the higher class of readers a very effective influence. He fully deserves, in our opinion, to rank with the above-named historians, who, from the philosophical nature of their works, have been classed under the denomination of "the philosophical school."

M. Augustin Thierry's *Letters on the History of France* is a work in which learning, boldness, and beauty of style are blended in an incomparable manner. His object is to eradicate those rooted errors that had so long disfigured the historical knowledge of his country: he proves that, previous to the nineteenth century, France had no historian worthy of any confidence; he shows how grossly the annalists have misused the old historical monuments of France—confounding the various races of Gaul and Germany under the name of Franks; and he exhibits their deplorable ignorance in not understanding that the unity of government was effectuated at a comparatively late period, and that most of the populations now composing the French nation were formerly distinct tribes, in a perpetual state of hostility, and almost constantly at war with the kings of the Franks.

In the severe and just judgment he passes on the historian Velly, M. Thierry points out the passages in the rough and poet-

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ical chronicler Gregory of Tours so ridiculously misunderstood by that pompous historian, who boasted of having faithfully drawn not only the portraits of kings but the events and characteristics of past eras. M. Thierry points out also the gross errors of Anquetil; and in a learned dissertation on the true epoch of the establishment of the monarchy, he rectifies the erroneous belief so generally entertained before our time, that the French monarchy, in 1789, reckoned an existence of fourteen centuries. He proves that, previous to the twelfth century, the kings established on the north of the Loire never succeeded—even during a space of fifty years—in establishing their authority on the south side of that river; he only perceives the unity of France in the sixteenth century, thus amending a universal blunder of modern historians. But notwithstanding the importance of this and other discoveries of M. Augustin Thierry, the most remarkable and useful is that concerning the enfranchisement of the boroughs (*les communes*), which belongs both to M. Thierry and M. Guizot. This great political fact was the remote source of the revolution that marked the close of the last century, the consequences whereof are not yet at an end. It was the access of the middle class, the *tiers état*, to a participation in state affairs, that is to say, the substitution of the *bourgeoisie* for the classes that had predominated in the feudal councils. M. Thierry deprives Louis le Gros of that glorious crown he had received from all the former historians, of being the founder of the boroughs of France. That result had its origin in higher interests.

We are now aware that the *communes* of France, or petty republics of the middle ages, were founded by the industrious populations distributed here and there within the circuits of walls, and bound together by ties of mutual interest and protection. It cannot be doubted now that the sweeping revolution of 1789 was but a consequence of the social efforts commenced by the old French municipalities; indeed, any one who will compare attentively the municipal struggles of the middle ages with the political contests of modern times, will be struck with many points of resemblance, both in the aspect and progress of those two great movements. The French citizens of the twelfth century were certainly very far from foreseeing the influence they were to exercise over the destinies of far distant ages.

At the same time, M. Thierry explains the fundamental difference existing between the borough revolution in the middle ages and the national revolution of our time; showing that the principles of freedom contended for in the boroughs were of a

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purely material character, so to speak, involving rights of locomotion, of buying and selling, of testamentary disposition, and other franchises incidental to a state removed but partially from feudal serfage; whereas the points at issue in more recent times concern objects of a more elevated and spiritual nature—liberty of conscience, of thought, of speech written and oral, and other rights essential to men in a state of high civilization and mental development.

A considerable portion of the *Letters on the History of France* is devoted to historical criticisms of the greatest interest. By tracing the proper names of the Frankish kings and tribes to their true Germanic origins, the author removes much of the error and obscurity that had arisen from the carelessness and mutilations of preceding writers; for it is a lamentable fact that, in France, a propensity has always prevailed to Frenchify and distort all proper names of foreign origin, ancient and modern—a vicious custom, which M. Thierry's exposure will tend, we trust, to extirpate. The critical part of the work is followed by an account of the borough of Laon, wherein a lively and graphic picture of mediæval manners is presented for curious contemplation.

It has been objected that M. Thierry's *Letters on the History of France* pursue somewhat too exclusively one particular object, namely, the condition of the borough communities, the *bourgeoisie;* and it is perhaps to be regretted that a man gifted like M. Thierry with so much historical sagacity, should have so greatly confined himself to one special branch of French history: the attention he has given to the *tiers état* seems to have prevented him from embracing a wider range of historical studies. The advocates of aristocracy had deduced the title to social sovereignty from the long-haired warriors of Germany. M. Thierry has annulled the pretensions of the pedigree by opening the communal charters; but his zeal in the controversy has carried him too far, to the exclusion of other important matters. Nevertheless, from what we have said of these letters, it will be justly inferred that the questions treated are of high and commanding interest, that the mass of information conveyed is of essential value to a just apprehension and perfect knowledge of French history, and that the work itself is entitled to the lofty rank assigned it among the most valuable productions of the modern historical school of France.

The first part of the *Letters on the History of France*, appeared in 1820, in the *Courrier Français;* and, after finishing his

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great work on the Conquest of William the Norman, the indefatigable author, despite the affliction of blindness, resumed his labors on the same subject, and published in 1827 a new edition of the former work, with a new series of letters; again, in 1836, he increased it by the publication of the *Scenes du Sixième Siècle;* and, lastly, in the spring of 1840, by the work entitled *Récits des Temps Mérovingiens, précédés de Considerations sur l'Histoire de France*—all equally distinguished for depth of historical investigation and beauty of style.

The *Récits des Temps Mérovingiens* exhibit, however, the historical genius of the author in a new light. With the impressive clearness of style which characterizes all his works, he here revives past events, and invests them with the interest of contemporary occurrences, imparting a picturesque and stirring animation to the annals of a barbarous period. He does not give, in those narrations of the Merovingian period (sixth century), as in his other works, a critical analysis of the past; it is the past itself which is recalled, with an admirable perception of barbarian manners, and a keen insight into the workings of the human heart in every variety of condition. They are portions detached from the early annals of the Franks, worked up into a semi-dramatic form. Each narrative centres round some one individual; and the interesting minor details relating to manners and customs have been judiciously selected by M. Thierry from contemporary authorities. The materials for this work were found by M. Thierry in the old chronicles of the time, especially in the venerable chronicles of Gregory of Tours, the Froissart of the age of the Merovingian kings. These Merovingian narrations possess many of the attractive features of Sir Walter Scott's works, but, with one advantage over the Scottish novelist, that of not mixing fiction with reality. The *Considérations* which precede them, embody a philosophical dissertation on history, in which Thierry illustrates all the methods of historical writing, and develops his own ideas on the origin of the French nation, in a manner so masterly, and with proofs so weighty and novel, as to have obtained the highest encomiums of severe and competent judges. The work obtained, in June, 1840, the academical prize granted to the best historical work. M. Villemain, the reporter, thus terminated the paper he read on the occasion: —"Will not the academy be lauded for having, by showing itself just towards a recent and admirable work, honored all the labors of an entire life, of a man of rare talent? And is it not of good example, also, that in the present age of forward preten-

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sions, so distinguished a recompense is awarded to merit alone, without favor or influence, and seeks it too in seclusion, where it is constantly retained by suffering, the privation of sight, and that consolation derived from study, the value of which public esteem can only augment by superadding glory?"

But the work of M. Thierry which has more than all the others justified—especially abroad, and in the eyes of the British public—his reputation as a great historian, is his *History of the Conquest of England by the Normans*, published in 1825. To Englishmen, indeed, no subject could be of deeper interest, whether they regard the nature of their liberties, the structure of their language, or the influence of manners; and it seems extraordinary that so long a period should have passed without there having appeared in the English literary world any historian worthy of the subject. The Norman Conquest, moreover, is perhaps one of the most remarkable events which have happened in the history of the world, whether it is contemplated in its causes or its consequences; nevertheless, most of the celebrated writers of England have discussed it with a brevity and superficiality little befitting so great a theme. It was therefore reserved to a French historian to produce a history of the Conquest of England by the Normans, entitled to the highest rank in the historical literature of the age, whether the learning and research it exhibits, or the philosophical spirit in which it is written, be considered. Such a work can only be appreciated as it deserves by the true lovers of genuine historical learning, competent to discern all the treasures of erudition it contains. To esteem it according to its value, a knowledge of the complicated difficulties that must be overcome in a work of this nature is required: the reader must be conscious how incompatible in general are habits of deep and patient research with the faculty of taking a broad and comprehensive view of any great subject in its origin, and of weighing its effects on the future history of the world. Still, to the mere lovers of literature, to the more popular and superficial reader, this work of M. Thierry is highly acceptable, from its variety of romantic and striking incidents, from its glowing pictures of ancient manners, and from the lucid order preserved in the subjects which are successively and skilfully brought under notice. His description of the unaccountable rapidity with which the Normans reduced England, his lively details on the warfare, on the history, on the mode of life of those formidable children of the north, are of surpassing interest. The illustrious historian excites the harrowing sympathies of his readers, when he traces

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the fiery progress of this destroying people in England, and when they listen to the groans of the Saxons. They share his enthusiasm when he dwells upon the actions and character of the great Alfred, who, amid the gloom and smoke of war, starts from the historical canvass the model of a patriot-king, a warrior, a legislator, and a man of letters; they partake also of the fire of the historian, when he relates the marvels wrought by Duke Rollo. Nowhere, moreover, can be found a more graphic account of the Norman influence predominating in the court of Edward the Confessor, educated in Normandy, and imbued with the strongest partiality for the Norman character and manners. This attractive part of the work draws the captivated reader to the following book, the third, which opens with the insurrection of the English against Edward's Norman favorites, and concludes with the famous battle of Hastings. The whole of this book is a masterly composition, both as regards learning and style; the description of the obstinately contested battle which decided the fate of England is one of the finest specimens of writing in any language. M. Thierry never allows the dry details and antiquarian discussions incidental to his subject to embarrass him; he disposes of them with unparalleled facility; he proceeds firmly and straight forward to his main subject, at once bringing it before his reader with great boldness of pencil and admirable felicity of expression. These qualities are in him the result of an extraordinary familiarity with the ancient writers, of a warm imagination, and of perfect clearness and distinctness in his conceptions, which are communicated to his style, and govern the arrangement of the various historical groups which occupy the picture.

The historical productions of M. Thierry, apart from the abovementioned works, were collected by him in 1835 into one volume, and published under the title of *Ten Years of Historical Studies*. The various articles that compose this volume are distinguished by the same eminent qualities that characterize his greater works. There are several among them on the English revolutions, and a very remarkable one is on the "Constitutional History of England" by Mr. Hallam. To these articles is prefixed a preface, which he very justly calls, "A History of my Historical Ideas and Labors," it being, in truth, an affecting narrative of his perseverance and assiduous toil. In reading it, we are initiated into the inmost workings of his truly Christian mind, and amazed to contemplate that incessant devotion to science which so signally illustrates him; we follow him in his indefati-

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gable labors, and behold him never discouraged, even when a cruel destiny deprived him of the divine gift of sight, so inestimable in literary pursuits. Speaking of his researches for the History of the Norman Conquest, he says—"The catalogue of books which I was obliged to read and make extracts from, was enormous; and as I could have but a small number of them at my disposal, I was obliged to seek the rest in the public libraries. During the depth of winter I used to sit whole days in the frozen galleries of the Rue Richelieu; and under the burning sun of summer, I often ran during the same day from the library of St. Geneviève to that of the Arsenal, and from the Arsenal library to that of the Institute. The weeks and months passed rapidly by, amidst these preparatory labors, in which neither the difficulties nor anxieties of the composition were yet encountered; in which the intellect, hovering at liberty over the materials that are gathering, composes and recomposes at pleasure, and forms at once the ideal of the edifice, which has yet to be erected piece by piece, slowly and laboriously. My thoughts embraced many thousand facts, scattered in hundreds of volumes, and found in them, in striking clearness, all the events and beings I wanted to delineate; and I experienced something of the emotion felt by a traveller at the aspect of the country he has long wished to contemplate, and which he has often beheld in his dreams." And a little further, speaking of the publication of the work, he says—"I at last reached the close of my undertaking, in the spring of 1825, after four years and a half of incessant toil. The success which I obtained went far beyond my hopes; but, however great the gratification, it met with a very sad abatement; my eyes had been worn out by labor—I had partly lost my sight."

In the hope of recruiting his health, M. Thierry afterwards made an archaeological excursion into the south of France; and, relating his return to Paris, he says—"I began again to proceed with that which I considered as my destiny; and, almost blind, I recovered all my zeal for fresh studies. The necessity of reading with the eyes of others, and of dictating instead of writing, did not check me. I had already been broken to this kind of labor in the composition of the last chapters of my work."

Speaking of his brother, M. Amedée Thierry, Prefect of the Department of the Upper Soane, who, although an historian of great merit, would suffer from a comparison with the author of the Norman Conquest, if any could be made, he says—"My brother, Amedée Thierry, was then terminating his History of

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the Gauls, which is one of those works of profound and conscientious erudition, in which the texts are exhausted, and which remain as the ultimate point (*dernier mot*) of science. He was preparing to give to the public one-half of the prolegomena of the history of France—the Celtic origins, with an account of the Gallic migrations, and a picture of Gaul under the Roman administration. For my own part, I undertook to give the other part, that is to say, the Germanic origins, and a picture of the great invasions which caused the ruin of the western Roman empire. I experienced a heartfelt delight at the idea of this fraternal association—at the hope of fixing our two names on the double basis upon which must be placed the edifice of our national history."

We cannot resist the pleasure of inserting the last paragraph of this preface to the *Etudes Historiques*, for it more than all depicts the sublime grandeur of the historian's noble soul.

"If, as I take a pleasure in believing, the interest of science is reckoned among the great national interests, I have given to my country all that can be given by the soldier mutilated on the field of battle. Whatever may be the destiny of my works, this example will not, I hope, be lost. I wish it could be instrumental in resisting the kind of moral weakness which is the malady of the new generation, and restore to the proper path of life some of those enervated souls deploring their want of faith, and seeking everywhere an object of worship, of devotion, without knowing where to find it—where to meet with it. Why repeat with so much bitterness, that in the world, constituted as it is, there is no aliment for all souls, no employment for all intellects? Is there not the eternal resource of calm and earnest study? Is not study a refuge, a hope, a career within the reach of all of us? With it, bitter days may be spent without feeling their oppression; with it, we can mitigate the severity of fortune, and make a noble use of our lives. Such has been the occupation of all my days, and if I had to enter anew the path of life, I would return to that which has conducted me where I am now. Irremediably blind and afflicted, deprived of all hope, I can give this testimony, the veracity of which will not be suspected, coming from me: there is in the world something superior to material gratification, more valuable than fortune, better than health itself—it is an ardent love for science."*

* It is fitting that the original of this extract should be given, for it is one of the most beautiful passages of the historian:—

"Si, comme je me plais à le croire, l'interêt de la science est compté au nombre

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We must add, that M. Thierry is placed by many at the head of the historians of the descriptive school, which, in our opinion, arises from a false notion of his merits. His memorable restoration of the earlier history of his country, his researches on the boroughs of France, and the sagacious remarks they constantly suggest to him with reference to modern policy, unquestionably entitle this illustrious victim of science to be ranked among the foremost historians of the philosophic school. But, in whatever system the world chooses to class him, all competent judges and lovers of true historical science will readily exclaim with M. de Chateaubriand, *L'histoire aussi aura son Homère, comma la poésie* (History also will have its Homer, like poetry).

To M. Guizot, however, is due the first place among the historians of France, and the first among those of the philosophic school. We cannot better depict the *ensemble* of his historical labors, than by adopting the words of M. Augustin Thierry respecting them in his *Considérations sur l'Histoire de France:* speaking of the progress of history during this century, he says: —"All those who, with more or less advantage, have participated in the labors of these last twenty years, are sufficiently known to the public; it would be useless to mention names; it does not belong to me to assign ranks. I shall confine myself to the works of M. Guizot alone, because they are the most extensive that have been executed on the origins, the revolutions, and the whole history of France. The Essays on the History of France, the History of European Civilization, and that of French Civilization, are three parts of one whole—three successive phases of

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des grands interêts nationaux, j'ai donné à mon pays tout ce que lui donne le soldat mutilé sur le champ de bataille. Quelle que soit la destinée de mes travaux, cet exemple, je l'espère, ne sera pas perdu. Je voudrais qu'il servit à combattre l'espèce d'affaiblissement moral qui est la maladie de la génération nouvelle; qu'il pût ramener dans le droit chemin de la vie quelqu'une de ces ames enervées qui se plaignent de manquer de foi, qui ne savent oú se prendre, et vont cherchant partout, sans le rencontrer nulle part, un objet de culte et de devoûement. Pourquoi se dire avec tant d'amertume que, dans le monde constitué comme il est, il n'y a pas d'air pour toutes les poitrines, pas d'emploi pour toutes les intelligences? L'étude sérieuse et calme n'est elle pas là? Et n'y a-t-il pas en elle un refuge, une espérance, une carrière à la portée de chacun de nous? Avec elle on traverse les mauvais jours sans en sentir le poids, on se fait à soi-même sa destinée, on use noblement sa vie. Voilà ce que j'ai fait et ce que je ferais encore, si j'avais à recommencer ma route, je prendrais celle qui m'a conduit oú je suis. Aveugle et souffrant, sans espoir et presque sans relâche, je puis rendre ce témoignage, qui de ma part ne paraitra pas suspect: il y a au monde quelque chose qui vaut mieux que les jouissances matérielles, mieux que la fortune, mieux que la santé même—c'est le dévoûement à la science."

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the same labor, continued during ten years. Every time the author has returned to his subject, the revolutions of society in Gaul from the fall of the Roman empire, he has evinced greater depth in his analyses, more elevation and firmness in his views. While pursuing the course of his own discoveries, he has constantly had his eyes open to the scientific opinions that others have promulgated, which, controlling and modifying, giving them greater precision and compass, he has incorporated with his own in the most admirable eclectic spirit. His labors have thus become the solid foundation, the faithful mirror, of modern historical science in its positive and invariable parts. As historian of our antique institutions, he has commenced the era of science in the strict meaning of the word; before him, with the exception of Montesquieu alone, there was nothing but systems. Let the writings of those who, since the revival of letters, have endeavored to give a complete view of the social history of France, be searched—let any one examine alternately, Hotman, Boulainviliers, Mably, Montlosier—no fundamental progress will be found. The abundance of printed documents at the service of the two last named, was almost equal to what it is among us, but without being of any use to them; we find a constant repetition of stupendous errors, of deductions drawn from false premises, of suppositions obscuring facts themselves. But when we turn to M. Guizot, and to his vigorous and comprehensive ideas, illustrated and proved by the original texts, how vast the difference we discern—how mighty the progress in all directions! The author of the Essays on the History of France, and of the History of French Civilization, propounds elevated collective views, which embody the very pith and essence of all substantial facts, and enjoy the double privilege of striking, like a flash of light, even the most common understandings, and of remaining impervious to the attacks of the most censorious erudition. Gifted with a marvellous talent of analysis, he walks with playful facility through the obscure epochs in which intricacies abound, and in which the elements of society seem opposed to each other, or scarcely distinguishable. He excels in describing the disordered, the fugitive, the incomplete, in the social state; in conveying impressively a perfect understanding of all that which cannot be brought into a formula, or is deficient in original coloring, or in precision of character. He possesses in the highest degree the impartiality of criticism, the faculty of holding an equitable balance amidst all the notions, traditional or acquired,

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in the multiplicity whereof is to be found the real picture, the true theory of our national history."

We perceive that M. Augustin Thierry names the three most important and celebrated works of M. Guizot, who, in their composition, had one sole object in view—the regeneration of history. The essays on the history of France, intended as a continuation to those of Mably, are infinitely superior to them. In this work, M. Guizot traces with a luminous pen the prejudicial effects and influence of the municipal laws of Rome, which had not previously been understood in France, notwithstanding the brilliant investigations on the subject by M. de Savigny of Berlin. M. Guizot analyses that Roman influence with singular clearness and profundity. Another work on the same subject, *Histoire du droit Municipal en France*, by M. Raynouard, who conferred such eminent favors on philologists by his researches on the Romance language, was published in 1828: it rendered good service by giving an impulse to such studies, but it contains numerous errors, and the author evinces an unpardonable ignorance of the profound work of M. de Savigny, published in Heidelberg from 1814 to 1816, entitled, *Geschichte des Roemischen Rechts im Mittelalter;* after which the best dissertations on the subject are those of M. Guizot.

M. Guizot's exertions in the cause of French history have been, moreover, advantageously directed to the original memoirs that have survived from remote times to throw light on their epochs. These he published under the title of *Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire de France.* The object of the publication, as will be surmised, is to reproduce, in naked simplicity, the rude chronicles in which past generations have themselves related their history. The first collection which appeared under his direction, comprises the first eight centuries of the French monarchy, from Clovis to Saint-Louis. The documents of this long period, written in corrupt Latin, had hitherto remained buried in oblivion, accessible only to favored industry. M. Guizot undertook to wade through and select from them such as were worthy of being brought to light, especially such as had been written by men who had been eye-witnesses of or participators in the events they relate. These he had translated without omission or alteration, merely adding notes necessary to elucidate the text; and thus gave to the public an original history of ancient France, with all its primitive coloring, sentiments, and ideas. His example was afterwards followed by others. M. Petitot continued, on a similar plan, this collection of memoirs,

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from the thirteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth, including important Memoirs of Cardinal Richelieu; and it has since been augmented by a third collection, published by M. Buchon, who has added some of the most curious old chronicles, together with those of Froissart, Monstrelet, and others. A yet greater collection of the same nature has of late years been undertaken and most successfully executed by MM. Michaud and Poujoulat, whose publication of *Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire de France*, from the thirteenth century to the end of the eighteenth, forming twenty-five large volumes, has been of essential advantage to historical pursuits. Notices illustrative of each epoch are annexed to the Memoirs, and every individual author is followed by a clever analysis of his historical records. Such are the results of the great impulse given by M. Guizot. When Minister of Public Instruction, he restored the *Ecole des Chartres*, consisting of a select number of young men, remunerated by government, whose duties are to discover and examine old French manuscripts and charters; he afforded every encouragement to the Historical Society of France; he instituted various commissions, each charged with special historical pursuits and studies, in the various libraries of France. His anxious and active mind has indeed ever been exerted to promote historical studies, and to enlarge the circle of historical information; but his works have more than all fixed the attention of the world, and opened the path, which so many are now following, to this vast and important field of human knowledge.

The celebrated course of Lectures on Modern History, by M. Guizot, comprises six volumes—one occupied by the History of Civilization in Europe, and the others by the History of Civilization in France. Both works breathe the same spirit, and have the same object, but differently applied. The purpose of the Lectures on European Civilization was the investigation of the different causes which have contributed to give to European society its particular form and character.

The mass of materials collected for this task, with indefatigable industry, are distributed and employed with unexampled ability and judgment, resulting from the most complete command of the subject. It would be impossible to find so many original, profound, and striking views in so small a compass; a more rigid severity in discarding unnecessary details, and so masterly a power of generalization. In the framework of a small volume, M. Guizot has comprehended the whole history of Europe, from the fall of the Roman empire almost to the present day. With

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this marvellous faculty of condensation and generalization he combines that of raising his reader to his own elevation, as he formerly did his crowded audience, enabling us, by his power of imparting large and general views, to look down with him on his vast plan, and at a single glance to embrace the widely-extended surface over which the striking and prominent features that mark the progress of humanity lie scattered. At the same time, the numerous details and examples that are adduced throw a vivid interest and graphic distinctness on the subject. The historian places before us every leading fact in each great epoch, presenting a succession of concise pictures, forcibly and brilliantly conveyed; taking care to note and point out the causes, features, and results of each fact, and the deductions that are to be derived from it; then he links and compresses these desultory parts into one comprehensive whole, with such startling effect, and imparts to his work so admirable and unexpected a character of completeness and unity, that the reader is lost in admiration at the wonderful capacity with which he is privileged to commune.

M. Guizot has pointed to the following as the main sources of the distinctive character of European civilization:—1st, The early organization of the church, and her labors to mould and bring into order, by means of moral influence, the chaos of physical force, then prevailing in society, and subsequently to bring all other powers into subjection to herself. 2d, The principle of submission to one head and source of authority, arising from the impression left on the minds of men by the long familiar idea of the Roman sovereignty, and producing in after times the monarchical spirit in the states of Europe. 3d, The municipal institutions which everywhere reappeared as the shadow of the empire began to pass away, and which eventually gave a new birth to civil liberty. 4th, The feeling of personality—the pleasure of individual independence—a sentiment unknown to antiquity, introduced into the civilization of Europe by the barbarians. The Greek or the Roman lived but for his city and country. The individual was absorbed in the citizen. In this uncontrolled existence of the free and roving inhabitant of the north, we recognize the germ of the feudal system, and the origin of some of the most prominent features of European character. At the same time, M. Guizot assigns a fair portion of influence on the progress of civilization to great men, such as Charlemagne and Alfred, and also to great discoveries. Every individual influence is distinctly marked and weighed, and all in

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combination are brought to bear, with inimitable art, on the final development.

In the Lectures on European Civilization, M. Guizot has confined himself to tracing out the causes which have affected the political and social condition of Europe; but in those on the History of Civilization in France, which form a kind of corollary to the others, he has treated at large its moral and intellectual history, and by far outstrips all previous competitors in the same field. Schlegel, in his *Philosophy of History*, has viewed everything through the distorting medium of his religion and enthusiasm; Herder's glance embraces but a comparatively confined circle; and Dr. Millar, in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Modern History*, adopts a theory, the aim of which is to prove that, in the history of Europe, from the fifth century to the present time, the moral government of Providence is distinctly visible, ordering and directing the actions of men and the revolutions of nations for a high and definite purpose. But M. Guizot asserts and demonstrates that action is under the control of mind; and, tracing the action of mind, he shows that in it consists, not merely the philosophy of history, but the very essence of history itself; and his view of the course of events can be connected with the principle on which the *providential* historians have based their theories. The French historian has therefore the high commanding merit of having discovered the great spring that gives to humanity its progressive movement, namely the opinions or state of intellectual knowledge that generate institutions; and as institutions rule and cause events, which is readily admitted by every one, we are indebted to M. Guizot for the main basis of all history. The progress of human intellect as developed by M. Guizot in his Lectures on French Civilization, with infinite strength and beauty, is completely overlooked or misunderstood by the greatest historians; the English author scarcely admits it as an incidental cause, and the German historian banishes it altogether; whereas the French historian makes the succession of popular, combined with individual opinions, the foundation of all true history. A very simple fact seems to demonstrate the truth of this theory, namely, that where there is no intellectual progress of the many, there is no history. The literature of India, so rich in sublime poetry and abstruse metaphysical speculation, contains no record of events, because their institutions are stereotyped, and their form is invariable, and, ascending a step higher in the analysis, because mind is motionless.

In tracing the progress of civilization, M. Guizot dwells strong-

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ly on a distinction which has been too much neglected by former historians, and the importance of which he explains and exemplifies with great effect, namely, the difference observable in the consequences of civilization, as it conduces to the improvement of the social system and as it tends to the perfection of the human mind. He afterwards portrays that variety which is the most striking characteristic of modern civilization; for, in all former systems, there was one dominant principle which excluded every other, and this was equally the case, whether the system was stationary, like that of Egypt and India, or progressive, like that of Greece and Rome. M. Guizot justly attributes this variety to the circumstances under which the present system first acquired consistency, and the diversity of the elements from which it was formed. But we cannot follow the historian into the investigation of those elements; such a pursuit, although delightful and instructive, would decoy us far beyond the limits of our plan: our object is simply to exhibit the true character of the modern literature of France, and an analysis of the History of French Civilization by M. Guizot would require and deserve a whole volume. Here again, therefore, we refer to the work itself.

The Lectures on European Civilization have had a great circulation abroad, in England especially, where they have been thrice translated. The translation of Mr. Talboys, published at Oxford in 1837, has been particularly noticed, owing to the excellent preface which he has prefixed to M. Guizot's work: this preface is remarkable for the elevation of its views, and a French version of it has been given in a new edition of the Lectures published in Paris. The other translations are—one by Maria Beckwith, and the other published by Messrs. Chambers of Edinburgh; but none of them can possibly give a correct idea of the spirit of the original. The circulation of such a work, in Great Britain as well as in France, must be—and we believe has been—of immense service to both countries, by diffusing clear notions of what has preceded the times in which we live. The instruction befitting men to form accurate and judicious opinions touching the past and the future, is doubtless well calculated to soothe, as we have said before, popular effervescence. Much of the irritation and hostility generated in periods of change, arises chiefly from the want of such guiding information. He who is in possession of it looks on with confidence, whatever changes may take place around him; he feels and understands that they are not the results of transitory agitation—outbreaks of temporary passions—but the effect of impulses given to society in re-

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mote ages, which in their operation embrace every country, the whole of Europe, and lastly the world. In this light, M. Guizot's work deserves to be considered as an inestimable boon conferred on all mankind, independently of its great historical value.

The literature, history, and constitution of England, have always been to M. Guizot subjects of admiration and study. When yet very young, he enriched the literature of his country with an excellent translation of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, to which he added many explanatory notes; moreover, as far as it could be done, he has corrected and improved Letourneur's unfortunate translation of Shakspeare, and written a very remarkable and universally admired life of the mighty bard of England. Lastly, some of the finest specimens of historical writing are to be found in his *History of the English Revolution*, one of the most accomplished historical compositions of our time. Whilst writing it, he followed the same course he had adopted with regard to the history of France; in order to convey a full knowledge of the age which he purposed to illustrate, he gave to the public a complete and valuable collection of original memoirs, relating to the reign of Charles I. and to the Commonwealth—an example which, as is justly remarked by Mr. d'Israeli, in his Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles I., reflects no great credit on the exertions of British antiquaries in the same department.

It does not require any very profound knowledge of history at present, to be aware how great was Hume's ignorance of the principal springs of the English Revolution of 1649. It is impossible to learn the real basis of his judgments, or to detect a general opinion reigning in his work, for he falls into frequent contradictions with himself, in his views even of particular acts. Hume's ideas on the English revolution are as narrow as those that have been sometimes entertained in our age on the French revolution—seeing in it a mere sudden explosion of human passions—a mere caprice, encouraged by the feebleness of a kind-hearted sovereign. He was incapable of understanding the distant and powerful causes that prepared it, as well as those that hastened it. It is, moreover, easy to penetrate the reason of Hume's aversion towards the English revolution, since he saw engaged in it those religious feelings which were the rooted object of his antipathy. That defective tendency of his mind is manifest throughout the whole history of the period. We are induced more particularly to speak of this historian, because he is yet the most popular in England, and has exercised, as we

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conceive, a very baneful influence, having, in our opinion, grafted prejudices and many gross errors on the nation, to a degree that is little considered. He only saw the English revolution in its details, forming upon it partial and unconnected judgments, without embracing this great event in one point of view—seizing its general sense, and marking its place in the natural order of human affairs and destinies. The faculty of so doing required, perhaps, the expèrience of M. Guizot—and it is the first idea of his work; he casts on the English revolution the thoughtful glance that had long rested on the French. "Such," he says, "is their analogy, that the first could never have been understood if the second had not occurred." Whilst, however, he pursues the parallel, he knows how to guard from false resemblances, never bringing together facts that would throw a false light upon each other; he uses all his advantages without ever falling into any abuse of them, the superior insight he has acquired into the epoch being unobscured by any of the prepossessions which are so common and so difficult to be avoided. His task was assuredly no easy one, and it required all the rare and just sagacity, the firm independence of spirit, and high logical powers of the illustrious historian, to accomplish it as he has done. He identifies himself with the English revolution, without ever being misled by the course of events; he calmly analyzes all that passes around him; the violent parties crushing each other, far from causing feelings of astonishment in him, are in his eyes the natural development of a great drama, which, through its various incidents, still possesses its unity. From this elevated point of view, enabling him to embrace at one glance the whole revolution, M. Guizot is the personification of true impartiality—not of that impartiality which arises from a cold want of interest in events—from mere indifference towards opinions—but of that enlighted conscientious impartiality, which is the expression of candor, honesty, and justice.

All the actors in this great drama are delineated, through their deeds and discourses, with inimitable precision. As a conspicuous instance, we may refer to the character of Charles I., which, in our opinion, has never been so powerfully and truly sketched as in M. Guizot's work.

In spite of any odium we may excite, we venture to express our belief, that the history of the revolution which agitated England in the seventeenth century, has never been recorded with such accuracy as by M. Guizot. In England, the prevalence of party feeling has contributed to rivet attention on this important period; but we shall in vain look for any narrative of it unsul-

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lied by political bias. It would seem, indeed, as if the quarrels of their forefathers are still perpetuated in the breasts of Englishmen, for their annals are written exclusively in the interest of one or other of the great parties struggling for predominance, whereby it must come to pass that the minds of the British youth are early impressed with prejudices on one side or the other, according to the class of historians first perused, and the ingenuous student may pant hopelessly for a truthful and impartial guide; consequently, a history of so debateable an event as the Revolution of 1648, proceeding from a learned foreigner, ought to be a precious gift in the eyes of Englishmen, for which their gratitude is due to M. Guizot.

After a general and profound view of the state of Europe at the period of Charles I.'s accession, M. Guizot gives a clear and succinct account of the proceedings of his three first Parliaments, principally drawn from the parliamentary history, and from Rushworth's collection. He then proceeds to sketch that gloomy period of misgovernment and disaffection which continued until the convocation of the ever-memorable assembly. Here we encounter those two remarkable men, Laud and Strafford, whose characters were so singularly balanced between exalted virtues and criminal propensities; whose ill-deserved elevation was so strangely compensated by the fate that overtook them; and whose names even yet call up reminiscences of love or hatred in the minds of Englishmen, as their prepossessions have been stamped: two striking portraits, as exhibited by M. Guizot, and sketched with an impartial and masterly hand. The French historian wisely abstains from discussing at length the causes and progress of the great theological quarrel, which added so largely to the bitterness of political hostility in those days; while, on the other hand, he does not fall into the common error of underrating the influence of religious enthusiasm, and of attributing its effects to other causes wholly inadequate to account for them. It would be an endless task to particularize all the admirable features and portions of M. Guizot's work; we shall confine ourselves to stating, that the prejudices and partiality of English historians, in treating of this period, become more grossly palpable when viewed in comparison with it, and that the account of the trial and condemnation of Strafford—brief, graphic, and impartial—the description of the general excitement and ferment that followed the departure of the king from London, and the notice of the character and effect of that paper-war wherein both parties, sword in hand, tried to vindicate themselves from the

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reproach of having recourse to arms, are all passages of vivid eloquence, unequalled in modern history.

M. Guizot's style, in his Lectures on Civilization, is in the highest degree dignified. It is equally so in all his works, his late Essay on Washington being one of the finest specimens of it; but his stateliness of diction, always clear and forcible, is, in his History of the English Revolution, happily mixed with the antique phraseology of the times which he describes; he has even inserted, in several places, scenes and conferences extracted almost verbatim from the contemporary authorities, a practice which gives an extraordinary dramatic interest to the compilation. The troubled and gloomy period which elapsed between the battle of Naseby and the execution of Charles is portrayed in spirited and faithful colors, and the account of the last awful scene of the tragedy may be classed as one of the most brilliant efforts of the historian.

After the eulogistic manner in which we have seen it fitting to speak of the History of the English Revolution, we are greatly concerned to add that the work is not finished; but, to our great pleasure, it has transpired, that, since its distinguished author has been resident in England, in the high capacity of ambassador of France, the most sanguine anticipations are indulged by the literary world of its speedy completion.

M. Simonde de Sismondi, a modest citizen of Geneva, has, in his lovely solitude near Lake Leman, given a powerful helping hand to the development of the true history of France. In the early part of the century, he passed upwards of fifteen years in compiling one of the most original and important works of our time—the *History of the Italian Republics in the Middle Ages*, comprising sixteen volumes. In this voluminous record, M. Sismondi traces with perspicuity the origin of the Italian republics in the eleventh century, and relates with graphic power and a glowing enthusiasm for liberty the long and heroic resistance of the Lombards against the German empire, and the incessant feuds and bloody struggles of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, when the genius of priestcraft was constantly arrayed in open or secret hostility against that of royalty. The portion of the history of the middle ages selected by M. Sismondi as the subject of his investigations, was perhaps the most obscure a bold historian could have approached; and yet, by dint of indefatigable exertions and researches, aided by the resources of a vivid imagination and a sparkling picturesque style of language, he has succeeded in dispelling the darkness that enveloped those heroic eras, and in

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throwing the charm of reality and romantic interest around their diversified incidents. The incredible heroism of those small republics, the patriotism and love of liberty burning within the breasts of their citizens, their prosperity, trials, and struggles, are delineated by the historian with an animating fervor; his soul seems fired by the spirit of the virtues he records. Patriotism and liberty are the constant themes of his eloquent eulogy. Moreover, his instructive parallels with the ancient republics of Greece are calculated to stir the admiration and arrest the attention of the reader, who beholds the grandeur of Epaminondas and Thebes reviving in Castruccio Castracani and Lucca—the classic ground of Athens transplanted to Florence.

But experience teaches us we are not to expect that the youthful fire, the ardent admiration of patriotism and liberty, manifested in early life, will continue unabated in more mature age; and this is signally exemplified in M. Sismondi, when at a later period he turns from the fair Italian region and prepares to rear a new historical monument. Riper years, longer meditations, and other influences not so easily to be comprehended, have contributed to invest his subsequent work with a character of comparative sedateness and frigidity; the latter part especially is marked by a spirit in striking contrast with the glowing exuberance pervading the History of the Italian Republics.

M. de Sismondi was the first who conceived the idea of creating a complete national history of France—a history of the whole country—of the whole nation; and upon this principle he has entitled his work *Histoire des Français* (The History of the French). He saw that, in a work of this nature, everything should be derived from original sources, and he spared no effort to obtain and consult them. He has forcibly demonstrated the absurdity of those historians of the last century who pretended to exhibit the constitution of the French monarchy as homogeneous during fourteen centuries, giving no heed or being insensible to the modifications it had undergone, to the vicissitudes it had experienced, to the diversified influences that had rocked it to and fro, in the interval from Clovis to Louis XIV. The *Histoire des Français* is a complete picture of the development of French civilization, with all its accessory springs, and of the progressive formation of the French nation, under the surface of events and the shadow of governments, and through all the palpable or occult revolutions of society. Those incessant revolutions which succeed each other from age to age, and in their course renew the face of society, operate differently but powerfully on the des-

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tinies of mankind; yet many of them are not only misunderstood or unobserved by contemporary generations, but remain unknown to and unperceived by subsequent shallow inquirers. They are consequently discoveries to be made, and such discoveries abound in the work of M. de Sismondi, all being the result of legitimate induction, and not mere rash hypotheses: their ascertainment by acute interpretation renders them not a whit the less certain and indubitable than those that are open and conspicuous to the most superficial observers. Furthermore, the sagacity which enabled the historian to withdraw the veil that covered them, excites still higher the admiration of the reader, from the superlative talent displayed in placing them in their most favorable and brilliant light. The *Histoire des Français* has reached its twenty-fourth volume, which analyzes the far-famed and machiavellian policy of Cardinal Richelieu, and opens the memorable reign of the Great Monarch. This volume was expected to be the last of the work, as the author had formerly expressed his intention of not carrying his history further than the commencement of Louis XIV.'s reign; but the lovers of historical pursuits and of true historical learning have heard with pleasure that M. de Sismondi will continue it as far as the Revolution.

After having characterized this monumental history, as it deserves to be, namely as a work of vast learning, research, and penetration, written with great purity of style, though often frigid in tone, we are bound to notice the grave reproaches that have been brought against it. M. de Sismondi's narrative does not always flow with equality, nor is it adapted to produce on the mind of the reader vivid and permanent impressions. The course of events is too often interrupted and obscured by philosophical speculations and general summaries. Men and events are never placed before the eye of the reader without being accompanied by abstract opinions or censorious remarks on the part of the author himself. The present is never forgotten, and thereby the past is rendered defective in clearness and life. M. de Sismondi has in no instance altered or garbled history in order to suit his own systematic views; he never strains after proofs in support of any preconceived moral or political theory; on the contrary, he relates facts faithfully, whether they are favorable or not to the ideas he professes on the object and constitution of societies. But, although free from censure on this point, as indeed might be expected from a judicious historian, M. de Sismondi is too often guilty of introducing into the narra-

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tive of facts his personal sentiments, which change their character and give them a certain false and modern color, which they unquestionably would not have otherwise borne. If M. de Sismondi, for instance, had recorded the exasperation expressed by the English monarch, Henry II., and the consequent murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury at the foot of the altar, without permitting himself to interfere and to speak in his own name, the circumstances would not be brought before posterity as in the following words:—"The murder of Thomas-à-Becket by the four Norman gentlemen who hastened to put into execution the wish of their sovereign, was an event much more strange in the twelfth century than it would seem in our time. We no longer entertain such a religious veneration for the clergy, nor have we such a complete faith in the force of excommunications; we judge Becket as we would any other man, and not as a god; we share the resentment that must have been felt by Henry II. for provocations so often repeated, and we are not very far from being rejoiced when the arrogant prelate suffers the punishment due to his insolence."

However opposed we may be to ecclesiastical pretensions, there is no reason to share, in this case, the opinion of the historian; and many will doubt, as well as ourselves, whether the murder of an archbishop at the foot of the altar would not appear as strange in our time as six hundred years ago. But there is no necessity, in general, for such opinions from the historian; the evidence of contemporaries is principally wanted, for therein dwells history, and the reader may be left to form his own judgment upon the fair statement of facts. This personal and direct intervention of the historian in past events is perfectly distinct from philosophical and scientific investigation; here his association of himself with the scenes which he describes deprives history of its poetical color, and throws confusion on its truth and interest. Whether owing to his being a citizen of a small republic, or whether the feeling be innate with him, M. de Sismondi seems to entertain a sincere aversion for royalty, which he especially evinces against the kings of old France in the first volumes of his work. He never allows any opportunity to escape him of stigmatizing them; he cumulates opprobrium upon all their heads, and often, we think, accuses them of faults and crimes that belonged chiefly to their time and to the existing state of society. It is true that nations are not often better than their kings, and it is very rare to find a society superior to its sovereign; for there is in the movement which impels humanity

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towards civilization something that crushes all resistance, and when justice and honesty are universally established in social life, they generally sit on the throne with the sovereign. It would, therefore, have been but justice in M. de Sismondi to exhibit the dark concomitant features, and explain that those barbarous and despotic kings were in perfect harmony with their people. M. de Sismondi may also be accused of having entered too hastily into his subject, and without having previously divested himself of prejudices; of not having originally arranged his materials so as to form one uniform and consistent whole, to the establishment and illustration of which all his investigations should tend. The discordance perceptible between the first volumes of his work and the last would not have existed; for it is proper to state that the harsh observations we have hazarded on M. de Sismondi's History of the French, are far less applicable to the latter part of the history than to its commencement—many of his opinions have undergone an obvious modification, and his style and ideas are more lofty and regular.

Turning to the more grateful task of eulogy, we repeat, that the *Histoire des Français* teems with conscientious historical researches of infinite value: the keen eye of the historian detects every monument, searches everywhere, and penetrates all obscurities; he advances with the events, describes, interrogates them; he afterwards pauses and considers, with rare sagacity, the new springs of society—the new relations which exist between its various classes—what new ideas, new sentiments, have emerged, and what transformation, unperceived by all, society has undergone. Thus he explains the causes of that unlimited sway held by the clergy during the seventh century; the moral effects of feudality in the tenth; and, during the eleventh, the real, varied, but unperceived progress of the nation, notwithstanding the nullity of its history and government in that period. The views he here propounds, as well as many others—nay, all the explanatory analyses of M. de Sismondi—are profound, elevated, and luminous; they reveal the progress of the nation during many centuries, mark all the phases of its existence, and leave on the mind of the reader that which is most important, a foreboding intelligence—a prophetic sense of the national destiny, and a knowledge of the present through the past. But, ere concluding our remarks on this great work of M. de Sismondi, we may be permitted to express a doubt whether, after all, he has given to France the imperishable historical monument she desiderates. We fear that this grand edifice can only be erected

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at a future period; but the nation will be indebted to him for having cleared, in a masterly manner, a huge mass of materials from a load of absurdities, falsehoods, and useless facts. His work will form a vast and adamantine basis for a proper superstructure, while much of it must be interwoven therewith, as from its perfection worthy of eternal preservation; and he who has executed it surely possesses a legitimate passport to immortality.

We cannot more appropriately close our dissertation on M. de Sismondi, than by transcribing the opinion of an illustrious historian on the *Histoire des Français*. M. Guizot, in his Lectures on Civilization in France, has judged M. de Sismondi's work severely, but in a manner only practised where the historian criticised is one of the greatest merit; for, by the side of the critique the eulogium is to be found, and it would be difficult to meet with a more complete or more succinct *resumé* of all the opinions that may be entertained of the *Histoire des Français*.

"Of all the histories of France," says M. Guizot, "that of M. de Sismondi is unquestionably the best. I have no intention of discussing at the present moment its merits and defects; yet it behoves me to tell you in a few words what you will find, and, above all, what I particularly recommend you to seek in it. Considered as a critical exposition of the institutions, the political development, the government of France, the *History of the French* is incomplete, and leaves, I think, something to desire: in the volumes which have appeared, the two most important epochs, as regards the political destiny of France, the reign of Charlemagne and that of Saint-Louis, are perhaps to be classed among the most feebly executed parts of the work. As a record of intellectual developments, of ideas, there is likewise a deficiency in depth of investigation and in exactitude of results. But, as a recital of events, as a picture of the vicissitudes of the social state, of the reciprocal relations of the different classes, and of the progressive formation of the French nation, the work is highly distinguished, and you will derive from it abundant and solid information. Perhaps you would desire a little more impartiality and freedom in the imagination; perhaps the influence of contemporary events and opinions is occasionally suffered to transpire too obtrusively: still it is not the less a vast and admirable production, infinitely superior to all those that have preceded it, and by perusing it with attention, you will be well prepared to enter upon the studies we have to prosecute in common."

But M. de Sismondi is also a profound economist. If his his-

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torical works are in the highest degree eminent for the new light they have thrown on the science of history, it must also be acknowledged that his books on political economy bear a special character of high social utility. The work entitled *Nouveaux Principes d'Economie Politique* is above all remarkable in this respect. In the first edition, published in 1819, M. de Sismondi boldly attacked the doctrines then in favor, and their partisans defended them with violence and acrimony. These hostile discussions created at the time a great sensation, and the *Revue Encyclopédique* was the arena on which all those attacks, refutations, and discussions took place. The illustrious historian had on his side all the men then known for their impartiality, learning, and experience, but events themselves came afterwards to vindicate his views more effectually, and to justify his theories and prophecies. From 1819 to 1826, Great Britain especially witnessed deplorable distress in her manufacturing districts, whereby the prosperity of the country was seriously jeopardized, and the effects of which were long severely felt: M. de Sismondi had foreseen them, and had explained what were to be the consequences of illimitable production. He proceeded to England to behold in person the too just and painful confirmation of his predictions; and many of the keenest inquirers of the nation, struck by the wisdom of his views, and feeling the necessity of reforming their own ideas on political economy, read his book with earnest attention: two English editions of it were soon exhausted; and it is to this day considered as one of the most estimable dissertations on the subject. Thus M. de Sismondi finds here other and no less legitimate claims to the gratitude of his age, and the respect and homage of posterity.

Dulaure, by his great work, which he has designated *A History of Paris*, has entitled himself to a place among the philosophical historians; the nature and comprehensiveness of his investigations, the characteristics that mark the whole composition, clearly elevate this author to rank with the Guizots and Sismondis of the age. The title conveys but a very partial idea of the scope and compass of the work. It is a history of Paris, undoubtedly, in the ordinary sense of the phrase, but if it were no more, we should pass it by as a study for antiquaries alone. We believe that all the histories of London, hitherto published, are chiefly histories of buildings and civic ceremonials, but Dulaure's subject is men. The topographical part of the work, at the same time, although of secondary importance, is beautifully executed. The author describes the city as it existed at each period of its history,

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and then proceeds, contrary to the fashion in vogue among expounders of antiquarian lore, to bestow some attention upon the inhabitants; and this part of the work is not so much a history of Paris as a history of civilization in France. It has been judiciously detached from the rest, and we are thus enabled to contemplate apart a truly admirable picture of the manners of men in bygone ages, teaching us how municipal affairs were conducted, how the citizens lived in private life, in short, how society at large subsisted. It is, moreover, greatly to the credit of Dulaure, that he has collated facts with equal industry and judgment, never relying on mere assertions, or taking upon trust naked data, until he has tested their accuracy by diligent scrutiny and comparison. Accordingly, we find that his work is not a mere register of the opinions of his predecessors; his ideas and deductions are throughout his own, and they are those of a great historian. Finally, nothing can be more attractive than his style; it is characterized by extreme neatness and exquisite simplicity, whilst an earnest and lofty tone of moral feeling tends to animate and invigorate it. This quality of Dulaure gives a peculiar charm to his work, and must render it highly acceptable to those who have grown disgusted with the heartless levity touching good and evil, so unhappily prevalent at sundry periods among writers both in England and France.

As to M. Alexis Monteil, author of the *Histoire des Français des divers Etats*, we cannot give a better idea of the nature and spirit of his work, than by copying his own words in the *Influence de l'Histoire des divers Etats*, which is a kind of historical manifesto—a syllabus of the first-named compilation, which extends over eight capacious quarto volumes. "History," he says, is the narration of what has been done; national history is the narration of what has been done by a nation; a nation is an association, a society of men, composed of various elements, of divers conditions. History consists, therefore, in showing what has been effected by those various elements, those divers conditions of a nation—therein dwells national history. Hence, national history is a history of the various conditions of men. No other national history can exist, since a nation cannot be composed but of its various elements, namely, its various conditions. But what are those elements, or rather those various conditions of a nation?

"There are, firstly, those of the agriculturist, the artisan, and the trader; and these alone form more than the three quarters and a half of a nation; next there are the callings of the finan-

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cier, the artist, the physician, the teacher, the lawyer, the magistrate, the priest, the governor, and the administrator, all of which form its muscles and nerves; there are other trades or professions, but they belong to the subdivisions of the preceding ones. Have we a national history? Yes, we have the 'History of the French in their different Conditions during the last Five Centuries,' the fourteenth century of which was completed in 1827 (he is here alluding to his own work); we have no other. It is singular that, during the three or four thousand years people have written histories, the world should have remained so long without possessing one—without having a national history: was it then so difficult to know what was history? Certainly it was difficult, since thousands of historians or philosophers had defined history, each in a different manner. But at least it was not so difficult to know what was a nation? It was yet more difficult, because the historians mistook for the nation the two or three higher conditions of society, consequently the least numerous, and this has been called by them and by all nations, history—the history of nations, because the errors incorporated in languages are the most difficult to extirpate. The languages protect and shelter them for a long time; and this is the case now with regard to the name and science of history.

It follows, from what has just been said, that Herodotus, in his Nine Muses—the father of history, as he is surnamed—has not written history, that is, the history of the various conditions, but that he has merely written part of the history of three conditions only—the military, the priesthood, and the chiefs of nations; to wit, the history of battles. And the great Livy, from whom we have all taken at school our first lessons of history, is it history that he has written? Same answer. But the immortal Robertson, and the immortal Voltaire, have *they* not written a national history? No; they have followed the old system of history, written the history of battles, to which they have annexed, as an appendix, the history of some other parts of society—of some other stages of life: but among which are found neither the agriculturists, nor the artisans, nor the tradesmen, who, as it has just been observed, almost form the totality of a nation. See how the prismatic analysis of the history of the various conditions leads to a clear appreciation, to a clear enunciation, of the connection and relations existing between the old system of history and the true national history."

We learn from this dashing extract the peculiar system which the author has developed in his voluminous national history. It

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contains an abundance of excellent and curious materials, but ill-digested, and presented to the reader with liveliness and incoherence. The materials and documents collected by M. Monteil will undoubtedly be of great value to future historians, and in all historical investigations, notwithstanding the paradoxical tendencies, which, as will be suspected from the high tone of the above quotation, characterize the work.

We here take our leave of the philosophical historians, who have, it has been seen, operated a signal regeneration in historical science. Their patience has been extreme in the pursuit of evidence and facts; their views, sagacious, novel, and profound, have carved out general rules for future inquirers; the world and posterity owe them a deep debt of gratitude for their scientific exposition of the philosophy of history.

Let us now turn to the historians of the fatalist school, whom we would rather term of the political school; for fatalism may be said to prevail with two historians only of eminence in any predominant degree—MM. Thiers and Mignet. Many of their imitators are beneath notice as historians, or have proceeded to such a pitch of extravagance in their ideas of fatalism, as to have apparently approached mental aberration, while others have singularly modified those ideas, and made them, as it will be seen, objects of philosophical disquisition.

But, if we adopt the classification of *école politique* (political school), which has been suggested and followed by some, we can at once comprise all the historians of contemporary events—all those who have given to the public an account of the French revolution, with their opinions on that gigantic event. We have previously spoken of fatalism; the historians imbued with this principle view all causes and effects as possessed of one character through a long course of years; to them these seem, from their steady progression, to be independent of human action or control. An impulse appears to be given, which beats down resistance and sweeps away all means of opposition; centuries succeed to centuries, and the philosopher sees the same influence still potent, still undeviating and regular; to him, considering those ages at one view, following with rapid thought the slow pace of time, a century appears to dwindle to a point; the individual obstructions and accelerations which within that period had occurred to impede or advance the *march of events*, as they say, are eliminated and forgotten. The mind dwells upon the necessity or fatality of the advance, and neglects what is all-important for practical purposes, namely, the consideration of how

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much, by human forethought, this certain improvement might have been aided. Thus the execrable excesses of the revolution are almost justified; they seem the result of a fatal necessity, without which French society could not have been regenerated. It will be readily understood that such a doctrine must lead the mind into a frightful abyss. At every moment the fatalist historian speaks of the *entrainement irresistible* of revolutionary times —of those sanguinary vapors that intoxicate and paralyze the volition of man. Such tenets, such excessive fatalism, we hold to be equally immoral and false. The mission of the historian, as well as of the philosopher, is to inspire the human heart with the sacred idea of duty as bound up with liberty, and to endeavor at all times to exalt the dignity of man, by inculcating detestation of crime and admiration of virtue.

M. Thiers's History of the French Revolution is a complete and highly finished narrative, on a large scale, comprising ten volumes; M. Mignet's history is a powerful, concise, striking epitome, in two small volumes. The extent of the first work is naturally conducive to great inequality; it has passages of surpassing eloquence, and others comparatively feeble and frigid; the latter work, on the contrary, having so many reflections and events to compress within a narrow compass, never loses its character of precision and energy. We are aware that these two compilations have for a long time been very well known in Great Britain; we will not therefore expatiate widely on their merits. They have no doubt contributed, in spite of the fatalist spirit they breathe, to remove the impressions that had so long prevailed in England touching the great event they record—impressions comprehended in a dim, horrible vision of mobs, massacres, revolutionary tribunals, and guillotines. By the side of its monstrosities, there were unseen springs and motions of the highest interest to mankind, which are analyzed by these historians. But England itself may now boast of a masterly work on the subject; we refer to Alison's History of Europe during the French Revolution.

M. Mignet is one of the most graphic historians of the French revolution, owing to his having mastered the grand difficulty in narration: he is interesting without being voluminous; concise without being vague and general. He abounds in traits like these: "In a revolution, all depends on a first refusal and a first struggle. In order that an innovation may be pacific, it must not be contested; for then, instead of prudent and moderate reformers, there are generated none but such as are extreme and

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inexorable. On the one hand, they combat to maintain their superiority; and, on the other, they establish their system in order to consolidate it." Speaking of the death of Robespierre, he says—"A man must therefore fall by the instrument that has served to raise him: the man of faction shall perish through the scaffold, as conquerors by war." His portrait of Danton is finely characteristic of his manner: "Danton was a gigantic revolutionist. Danton, who has been called the Mirabeau of the populace, had many points of resemblance with this tribune of the higher classes. This puissant demagogue (Mirabeau) offered a singular mixture of contrary vices and qualities. Although he had sold himself to the court, yet he was not vile, for there are characters exalted even in baseness. . . . A revolution was in his eyes a game, in which the conqueror, if he needed it, fairly won the life of the conquered."*

The history of the French revolution had formerly been written by certain authors with such painful minuteness, that he who had the patience to read to the end any of their works, had time before he arrived there to forget the beginning of the story; and others, again, had contented themselves with giving a meagre abstract, describing the most remarkable scenes in terms so general, as to have suited a hundred other scenes almost equally well. It is impossible to be interesting without details, but details may be endless, they may banish all distinctness, while their absence produces dryness and want of vivacity. Here is the dilemma. The skill of the historian is displayed, therefore, in the apt selection of details, in judging which of the individualizing, strikingly characteristic features, it is best to fix upon and delineate, when there is no room for all. M. Mignet possesses this quality in an extraordinary degree. His narrative is

* M. Mignet's conciseness is not easy to translate, we therefore give the original of the quotations introduced:—

"En révolution tout dépend d'un premier refus et d'une première lutte. Pour qu'une innovation soit pacifique, il faut qu'elle ne soit pas contestée; car alors, au lieu de reformateurs sages et modérés, on n'a plus que des reformateurs extrêmes et inflexibles. . . . . D'une main ils combattent pour défendre leur domination, de l'autre ils fondent leur système pour la consolider."

"Il faut alors qu'on tombe par ce qui a servi à vous élever: il faut, homme de faction, qu'on périsse par les echafauds, comme les conquerants par la guerre."

"Danton était un révolutionnaire gigantesque. . . . . Danton, qu'on a nommé le Mirabeau de la populace, avait de la resemblance avec ce tribun des hautes classes. . . . . Ce puissant démagogue offrait un mélange de vices et de qualités contraires. Quoiqu'il se fut vendu à la cour, il n'etait pourtant pas vil, car il est des caractères qui relèvent jusqu'à la bassesse. . . . . Une révolution à ses yeux était un jeu, où le vainqueur, s'il en avait besoin, gagnait la vie du vaincu."

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a perfect model of the apt selection of details. No one has more admirably combined circumstantiality with condensation, or given what may be more justly and emphatically described as a graphic narrative. Whosoever should collect together and survey the voluminous compilations that have issued from the press as histories of the French Revolution, and then turn to M. Mignet's small volumes, would assuredly wonder by what art he could abridge so much, and with so little of the appearance of an abridgment. These qualities of manner and style distinguish all that comes from M. Mignet's pen; as secretary to one of the sections of the Royal Institute (*Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres*), it has been his province for many years to pronounce the *éloges* of deceased members, most of whom have enacted a conspicuous part in the world of letters or of politics. Thus, among his striking portraitures of eminent men, we find the *éloges* of Raynouard, Rœderer, Prince de Talleyrand, Casimir Broussais, and others of a similar class. It is to be hoped that, after a certain period has elapsed, these will be collected by him and published separately, for they would form a volume of high merit and value. In the mean time, M. Mignet is pursuing his labors on a History of the Reformation, which has already, for more than ten years, absorbed the greater portion of his time and studies.

M. Thiers's History of the Revolution is, as we have observed, on a much larger scale than that of M. Mignet. It has been, and is still, one of the most popular books of our epoch; in France, it is to be seen in the hands of all: nor is this to be wondered at, when we consider the peculiar attraction the author has succeeded in imparting to his long historical record. His account of the first Italian campaign of Napoleon, is a truly magnificent episode. Moreover, there are in the work frequent bursts of mournful sympathy, of heartfelt eloquence, highly calculated to rouse the enthusiasm of French readers; and it has done so in the highest degree.*

* This is the close of M. Thiers's account of the campaign of Italy in 1796:—

"Days forever renowned, evoking painful regret on retrospection! At what epoch was France as a nation greater or more glorious! The storms of the revolution appeared hushed; the murmurs of parties were heard only as the dying echoes of the tempest. Those remains of agitation were indeed regarded as the vital principle of a free state. The trade and finances of the country were happily emerging from a dismal crisis, and its soil, restored to industrious cultivators, promised more than wonted fecundity. A government composed of citizens, all equals, ruled the republic with moderation; the worthiest were called to succeed them. All voices were free. France, at the pinnacle of power, was mistress of all the

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The histories of the French revolution which preceded those of MM. Thiers and Mignet are almost forgotten; the work of Lacretelle, for instance, and another of Tissot, although not without merit, have entirely passed away. At a later period, M. Eugene Labaume, author of a History of the Russian Campaign, not discouraged by the popularity of the two great fatalist historians, published a "Monarchical and Constitutional History of the French Revolution," which had previously been announced for a considerable length of time. It is a conscientious work, full of important facts that had been neglected or unperceived by others; rather heavy, and written under the influence of high monarchical principles. There is, likewise, the *Histoire de France depuis* 1789 *jusqu'en* 1825, by the Abbé de Montgaillard, which has met with great and well-deserved success. This historian is sometimes violent, always incisive and energetic; his style, although marked by asperities, is often forcible and elevated. His work contains an abundant mass of documents, from which is wrought a picturesque *coup-d'œil*, darkened at times, however, by too prolix and elaborate descriptions of men, in lieu of elucidations of facts and things.

The ten volumes of the *Histoire de la Révolution de France*, by Viscount de Cony, lately completed, are remarkable for the brevity with which the author relates events, correcting, at the same time, numerous errors that had escaped preceding historians. The first chapter, on the moral causes of the revolution, is

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territory stretching from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, and from the Ocean to the Alps. Holland and Spain were about to unite their fleets with hers, and to attack in concert the maritime despotism. She was resplendent with immortal glory. Redoubtable armies bore her three colors fluttering triumphantly in the face of the kings who had conspired to annihilate her. Twenty heroes, differing in character and in talents, similar only in age and courage, led her soldiers to victory. Hoche, Kléber, Desaix, Moreau, Joubert, Massena, Bonaparte, and many others, were rising to fame concurrently. Men canvassed their respective merits; but as yet no eye, however piercing it might be, detected in that galaxy of heroes the unfortunate or the criminal; no eye marked him who was to expire in the flower of his age, wasted by an unknown malady—him who was to perish under the Mussulman's poniard or beneath an enemy's fire—him who would oppress liberty—or him who would prove a traitor to his country: all appeared great, pure, fortunate, ripe for future destinies! This was but for a moment; yet there are isolated moments in the existence of nations as in that of individuals. Internal tranquillity was beginning rapidly to reproduce wealth; liberty and glory were already abundantly enjoyed. In the words of an ancient, "A country ought to be not only prosperous, but sufficiently glorious." This condition was fully realized. Frenchmen, we who have since seen our liberty stifled, our country invaded, our heroes shot or false to their fame, let us never forget those immortal days of liberty, of greatness, and of bright anticipation."

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a striking composition. M. de Norvins, author of a very creditable history of Napoleon, the only one that seems to remain popular, has also written an *Essai sur la Révolution Française*, which disappointed the admirers of his History of Napoleon, by its paradoxical principles and exaggerated vindication of the revolution. M. de Norvins is unquestionably a writer of talent, but traces of the spirit of Voltaire are too perceptible in him.

One of the most important works published in recent times on the great commotion, is, we have reason to maintain, the *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française*, by Buchez and Roux, which is a collection, in forty volumes, of all that was said and written during that memorable period. It not only reproduces the debates in all the assemblies—the Convention, the Council of Five Hundred, the Council of Ancients, the Legislative Body, and so forth, including even the Chamber of Representatives during the Hundred Days—but it brings to light the arcana of the Jacobin Club, and the diatribes of the revolutionary press, which had been but very partially touched upon in any previous publications. This valuable collection is, moreover, preceded by a remarkable preface, in which the compilers develop at large their individual views, the bias whereof transpires more or less throughout the whole of the voluminous work.

M. Buchez commands esteem by his conscientiousness and learning. Many years of his life, in association with his friend Roux, have been spent in collecting documents relative to the revolution, arranging them for the press, and giving to them their appropriate philosophical interpretation. No objection can be started against this interpretation, for it is distinguished by all the evidences of vigorous thought, except that it carries to an extravagant length its main idea and axiom, to wit, that the revolution was anti-religious and anti-Christian. There is no doubt that the revolutionary elements were more peculiarly philosophical in their origin and manifestations; yet they did not amount to a denial of the Christian traditions, but merely to a severance from their influence: and while M. Buchez drags Christianity into affairs where its divine grace could not be felt, or feebly so, he falls into an inconceivable forgetfulness of its spirit and charity, when he endeavors to vindicate the right of society to crush its enemies or when he tries to prove that terror is an engine that may be legitimately employed from time to time to strengthen the basis of social order. In short, the learned historian's object seems to be throughout to establish this well-known maxim—"the end justifies the means."

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It is a general tendency of our time to seek in Christianity and the gospel an authority and justification for every species of flagitiousness both in theory and practice. We have, indeed, heard apologists of slavery come forward with effrontery, and cite St. Paul as a defender of their execrable abominations, because the apostle says, in one of his epistles, that slaves ought to tremble before their master. Thus, by misinterpretation, the Christian religion, mother of all the blessings and liberties of modern times, is brought forward in justification of a social leprosy. We should be loath, however, to accuse the compilers of the *Histoire Parlementaire* of making an undue use of the weapon of religion, because their work is one which, upon almost every ground, is deserving of the highest esteem, and cannot but be of inestimable value to those who wish to penetrate to the inmost depths of that greatest of historical dramas.

The best complement to the histories of the French Revolution is the recent "History of France under Napoleon," by M. Bignon, a peer of the realm. The impartial gravity of this work has fixed the attention of Europe; it is perhaps the most complete diplomatic history existing of that eventful period; the author, having borne a high diplomatic character in Napoleon's time, and having obtained the emperor's confidence in some of the most mysterious transactions of his reign, relates a multitude of events in which he himself took an active part. The manner of M. Bignon is characterized by a thoughtful gravity which has a peculiar attraction; his solemn tone, adapted to such an epoch, described in our time, is singularly affecting, now that so many of the great actors are laid in the dust. M. Bignon unravels, with calm and dignified sagacity, all the ramifications of that bold and extensive organization which tended to prostrate Europe beneath the sway of a single individual seated on a throne of bayonets.

M. de Chateaubriand also belongs to the political school of historians by his *Etudes Historiques*, in which he never omits an opportunity of instituting comparisons between early events in the history of France and contemporary occurrences. A rumor had been prevalent during many years that M. de Chateaubriand was preparing a history of France, and the announcement had naturally caused high expectations to be entertained; but the public was in no small degree surprised when, in 1832, the *Etudes Historiques* were published. They consist merely of fragments, and he gave as reasons for not putting his former plan into execution, his advanced age, and the discouragement

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and lassitude provoked by again beholding a darling throne laid prostrate at his feet. These considerations, however, did not debar him from attending to other works, namely, the "Congress of Verona," and the "Essay on English Literature." The above historical fragments refer to various portions of the history of Europe, from the Christian era down to Louis XVI. The author, apparently fearing that his labors would never be perused, has traced out his plan without doing more than fill in certain parts. What he has done, what he intended to do, he has explained at great length in his preface, the early part of which is employed in cursory discussions on the existing state of historical knowledge in France, Germany, and England, and it is by far the most entertaining portion of the work; a great part of it is also employed in exposing the erroneous, immoral principles of the fatalist school of historians, after having, however, distributed to each of its distinguished members an ample share of eulogium. The readers of this work would, nevertheless, be almost justified, if they accused M. de Chateaubriand of participating in that fatalism which so strongly excites his indignation in the preface alluded to, for he adduces the same justificatory pleas for the despotism of Louis XIV. as M. Mignet for the horrors of the revolution; both are represented as inevitable evils, necessary links of a chain. Upon the whole, the friends of persecution, superstition and despotism, are too often right in the eyes of M. de Chateaubriand.

We here bid adieu to the historians whom we have classified under the denomination of the political school. The remarkable, eminent, and important group of the descriptive school will form the principal theme of disquisition in the subsequent section; and we will consequently devote our immediate attention to an historian who cannot, strictly speaking, be placed in any of those idle classifications which are so generally adopted, and which have been followed here almost against our will. M. Michelet, though partaking the distinctive merits of the greatest historians of every school, stands entirely apart from the rest, by his style, his manner, by the nature of his views and of his historical researches. M. Michelet might almost be said, indeed, to be the founder of another school—another sect of historians. He might be considered as the father of a symbolic school of historians, and thus the expression, or representative, of Vico, and his *Scienza Nuova*. Symbolic induction is the spring of M. Michelet's historical compositions. The genius of Vico had already captivated his intellect, and he afterwards inhaled from Niebuhr

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that same symbolic spirit, which is so conducive to a world of errors, and which would obviate the necessity of patient labor and investigation; a latitude most dangerous to any not gifted with the comprehensive and profound intellect of M. Michelet, and even he has been accused of indulging too much in far-fetched analogies.

The admirers of M. Michelet—and they are numerous and warm—consider his system as combining the advantages of the other schools of historians; for, if individuality sinks under the general human race with the philosophic writers, humanity is effaced by individuality with those of the descriptive school; while, in the eyes of symbolic learning, the history of a nation, of a country, with its intellectual progress faithfully traced, given in its true color, as to customs, manners, sympathies and antipathies, may serve as a history of humanity altogether; whereby it results that, however limited a nation may be, its history is not, as a necessary consequence, of a diminutive nature, or of secondary importance; although the history of a small branch of the human race, it is the history of mankind. In every locality, the drama of human progress and action, with more or less actors, is ever the same—ever sublime and prophetic. With the symbolic system of history, one individual may be the type of a race, a fact of a general custom; with it, the province of history is to exhibit and compare the successive solutions of the social problem, to render every nation responsible to the genius of civilization for the path it has followed, in its efforts to reach the solution of this same problem; whence emerge the proofs of the eternity of the human race. On this basis reposes all that may be deemed universal in history; and individual liberty takes an exuberant development in the infinite movement of its external life. It is easy to understand what extent and ramifications may be given to these fundamental principles of perpetual symbolism, and what excesses of error may result from their application by ordinary capacity, indolent intellect, and false learning.

The *Scienza Nuova* of Vico was translated in 1827 by M. Michelet; we believe the work was previously unknown in France. It was perhaps during the period he was engaged with this task and its attendant studies, that the French historian beheld clearly for the first time the general laws by which Divine Providence governs this great community called humanity. He develops, in his introduction to the translation, couched in his own brilliant diction, the entire system of Vico, together with his own ideas and modifications. Vico could not have found a more wor-

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thy interpreter. M. Michelet, in the second edition, speaking of the favorable reception this great work had met with in France, and of its novelty, says—"The originality of his ideas, the singularity of his style, equally tend to isolate him. The fate of the Seven Sleepers was reversed in him. He had forgotten the language of the past, and could speak only that of the future. But if it were then too soon, perhaps it is now already late. For this great and unfortunate genius, the time has never come." Thanks to M. Michelet, Vico is now familiar to all inquiring minds, and all can appreciate the depth of his genius, Germanic in kind and character, although moulded under the scorching sun of Naples. He has very recently been the subject of a remarkable book, entitled *Vico et l'Italie*, by M. Ferrari.

In 1830, M. Michelet went to Rome; and soon after his return he published a History of the Roman Republic, in which he introduced the ideas of Niebuhr, whose great work has since been very ably translated by M. de Golbéry. M. Michelet had not then attained all the excellence of his historical manner; his style, often irregular, was disfigured by overstraining after effect, and was very far from possessing the poetical perfection so resplendent in his last two volumes of the History of France: his proneness, moreover, to discover and explain symbols and allegories was carried to an excess that provoked much severe criticism. The work contains, nevertheless, many striking passages: the first descriptive chapter is a splendid piece of composition, marked by surpassing brilliancy; and his observations on Hannibal, fraught with the soundest learning, are deeply interesting; he describes in vivid and faithful colors that heroic chief of heterogeneous legions, who has been so often disfigured in the page of history.

M. Michelet had long devoted his leisure hours to the collection of historical materials respecting Luther. The leisure occupations of some men are more precious than the serious labors of others. After having collected all the memoranda and scraps which the great reformer had neglected to destroy, and others buried in the mass of his works, he gave them to the public under the modest title of "Memoirs of Luther, written by Himself, Translated and Arranged by M. Michelet." These contain invaluable materials for a good and impartial life of Luther, which yet remains to be written. M. Michelet's lofty spirit and intellect are above all religious prejudices; he has given to his country a true Martin Luther, instead of the ridiculous effigy described by Roman Catholic writers; and to accomplish this he has had re-

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course to Luther himself, tearing from him, as it were, his secret thoughts, the intimate workings of his mind, so imperfectly developed in his actions. We behold in these memoirs the very soul of Luther, hitherto entombed in the huge chaos of his writings, re-animated with the breath of life and betokening all its pristine hardihood. It is true that Luther's disciples had preserved with religious care and reverence the words that fell from the mouth of their master; but such mementos of the great reformer are deprived of much of their value by the confusion and inconsistencies wherewith they are fraught. M. Michelet, on the contrary, has pursued the genuine spirit of Luther as a miner a vein of gold; he has extracted the virgin metal from the intermingled seams in which it lay embedded.

We have said that a monumental life of Luther is yet to be written. Such a work will need one of those rare and commanding intellects who shine as eternal luminaries to posterity; and we are fortified in this opinion by the perusal of the two large volumes of the "History of the Life, Writings, and Doctrines of Martin Luther," by M. V. Audin, published only a few months ago. It is a work remarkable for the unexampled abundance of details, facts, and documents, all collected from German sources with meritorious patience and industry; its numberless quotations will be of the highest importance to those who may hereafter investigate the character and deeds of the reformer. M. Audin has searched, with indefatigable courage, the libraries of Mayence, Erfurt, Cologne, Strasburg, Lyons, Florence, and the Vatican. He has explored every corner of Germany where Luther had left any traces, and after the works of Pfizer, Cochlæus, De Villers, Ulemberg, Voigt, Seckendorf, his is by far the most complete record. But it is unfortunately tainted throughout with the infection of religious prejudice; it is lighted up by the glaring flame of Roman Catholicism. His narrowness of conception with reference to religious matters will excite feelings of repugnance in all enlightened minds, of whatever tenets. He was incapable of doing for Luther what the illustrious professor of Berlin, Ranke, has executed for the Papacy. We reprobate M. Audin's anathemas against Luther, as much as the rancor displayed by the Protestant historian of Luther, Merle-d'Aubigné, against Leo X. excites our contempt. An historian, at the present day, does not deserve that honorable name, if he cannot guard against exaggerations and prejudices. Compilations to gratify religious passions and fanaticism are common enough; we have only to look back to former historians. Martin Luther, the great re-

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former, whose powerful intellect was even admired by Bossuet, was not merely a gross, sensual monk, ambitious without principles; nor was he an angel, and all purity of mind—a *Sanctus Lutherus*, as he was called by one of his disciples who abjured all saints. Truth cannot be found on either side; it cannot be discovered in or from either of the two camps, nor between them: it soars above.

To return to M. Michelet. It is in his History of France that are to be found the rich streams of his exuberant poetry and varied learning; never has such a fascinating hue of freshness been thrown on historical science. His impetuosity is at once startling and attractive; he dashes boldly against our old historical prejudices, and scatters them before the light of reason; he exposes a multitude of errors that had been in possession of human credulity for ages, and points out a true sense and meaning in that which was mere superstition in our eyes; on the other hand, he shows a poetic purpose where we only perceived a real or material one, and exhibits a commercial interest at a period where we only beheld chivalry. M. Michelet's History of France is, in truth, distinguished by brilliant intellectual capacity, warm and generous emotions, and sagacious investigation. We have a remarkable instance of the latter quality in the first volume, which contains the fruits of much curious and patient research touching the various races that cover the French soil. M. Michelet's ideas, however, on this subject, were discussed and opposed with great talent and erudition, by the Baron d'Eckstein, in one of the early numbers of the *Revue Européenne*, which has long ceased to appear. We can scarcely be expected to enter at length into the points in dispute between these two authorities respecting the former tribes of France; merely to direct attention to Eckstein's refutation, must, amidst the universal admiration which it has excited, be sufficient.

The opening of the second volume, tracing a picture of the country, is a masterpiece of historical geography. A few strokes of his powerful pen are enough to stamp an indelible impression of the physiognomy of the various provinces; he follows, with an eagle's eye, the course of rivers, the chains of mountains, the whole expanse of landscape, and relates as he proceeds the principal features and political facts of every division, and how each came by degrees to merge in the vast unity of France. The historian afterwards groups, with inimitable skill, the eminent artists and men of learning, who constitute the immortal glory of a nation. He is, however, sometimes to be blamed for a want of calm

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meditation, and for certain hazardous, nay, unjust assertions, interspersed among the noble thoughts which gleam so brightly in his picturesque and nervous pages. Furthermore, M. Michelet is always animated by a deep feeling of admiration for Gothic art —for liberty, pure intellect, and virtue; which tendencies of his mind are not to be analyzed; they must be partaken and enjoyed in his works.

The capital feature of the third volume is the history and fall of the Knights Templars. The scandalous circumstances attending their destruction have never been so clearly and yet so succinctly developed as by M. Michelet. His relation of the Sicilian Vespers is also striking by its brief energy. Then comes that memorable struggle of a hundred years between England and France, so disastrous to the latter. The historian's point of view on the subject of this national warfare bears the peculiar stamp of his investigations: the true causes and mainsprings of the incessant strife, as he exhibits them, had never been perceived by any other historian. M. Michelet is unique, admirable, and profound, when he shows us, behind the serried ranks of steel-clad knights, behind the chivalry of the time, the real material interests of the age, which had escaped observation amid the clash of arms and the dazzling achievements of heroes, but which supplied, nevertheless, the grand impetus to the movement and prowess of that martial epoch. But at times our author diverges from the beaten track of history; he pauses and turns aside to converse with subordinate characters on the stage of life: a merchant relates his adventurous travels, or a monk unfolds his important mission; in truth, his inquiring glance is thrown on all sides—the aspect of the country is described, and its character studied as well as that of its inhabitants. Sometimes, to obtain a better knowledge of the locality, he takes a cross-road, listens to the popular songs and the tales of rustic simplicity, which throw a clearer light on the genius of humanity than all the philosophy of the last century. Eventually he gives a comprehensive summary of all he has told and seen, ever showing himself a true philosopher.

On the other hand, the sympathies and hatreds which M. Michelet feels and inspires for the parties of former ages are too strong; they are often stronger than those entertained in our time towards contemporary opinions and events; they inevitably prevent an impartial analysis of the characters and occurrences of those earlier times. He moreover often introduces, for the mere sake of poetical display as it would seem, subjects

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and episodes that have apparently little or nothing to do with the main subject; such, for instance, is his digression on Petrarch and Laura. There are also reflections and remarks in deplorably bad taste, which seem actually thrown in on purpose to soil the limpidity of the historical stream. Here is a singular example in point: — "Wool and flesh are the primitive foundations of England and the English race. Ere becoming the world's manufactory of hardware and tissues, England was a victualling shop. From time immemorial they were a breeding and pastoral people—a race fatted on beef and mutton. Hence that freshness of tint, that beauty and strength. Their greatest man, Shakspeare, was originally a butcher."

Let us in candor forgive the historian such puerile and preposterous ideas. We ourselves have heard him acknowledge, from his chair in the Collège de France, that he was but slightly acquainted with England as it exists in the nineteenth century. Such blemishes may mar particular passages, but they cannot prevent the History of France, as executed by M. Michelet, from appearing in the light of a drama guided apparently by Providence to its closing scene, and wherein its distinctive phases are marked with indelible colors. A regular methodic history of France is not what will be found in the work: it is more like a cluster of gems thrown negligently in wreaths, with the capriciousness of lofty impulses; indeed, it cannot be appreciated without much previous knowledge of the history itself. The glory of the historian consists in unfolding the Divine superintendence in the vast chain of operations, which is revealed only to a few gifted spectators: such is the principal glory of M. Michelet, though the generality of readers are chiefly captivated by the brilliancy of his style, and by the warmth and fervor of his imagination, which occasionally tends to mislead him. He frequently accumulates in one page so many facts, ideas, parallels, and brilliant phrases, that the reader is completely dazzled. This manner of composing history is doubtless less calculated to convey instruction than that of the Greek and Roman historians, or of M. Guizot, who never aims at any poetical form of language. But the nature of M. Michelet's soul can never change; he is perhaps a great poet astray from his natural and primitive path; but whatever ought to have been his pursuit, there can be no question that he is the greatest historical poet, the most poetic historian, of the nineteenth century.

There is a delicate and hallowed ground for historical investigation, which has of late years been the subject of two eminent

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works, full of profound researches. The first is in French, and entitled *Jesus Christ et sa Doctrine*, by M. Salvador, author of the *Institutions de Moïse;* the other is in German, the *Life of Jesus*, by Dr. Strauss, of which M. Littre of the Institute has given an excellent French translation. M. Salvador's work relates the life of Jesus Christ and of the most celebrated apostles, and then proceeds to a grave and conscientious examination of the Christian doctrine, of its connections with the philosophical and religious theories already known at the commencement of the reign of Augustus, and of the metamorphoses it has undergone from its very cradle. When he takes Christianity in a philosophical point of view, he refutes and denies the Catholic tenet, which affirms that the doctrine of Jesus Christ, taken not only in any of its conditions but in its whole, is the absolute truth now disseminated in the world through priesthood; and also that it is applicable to all situations of man and all states of society. And afterwards, when he considers Christianity in a religious point of view, his investigations lead him to conclude, that Jesus Christ was not the son of Abraham, through whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, and that the whole Jewish prediction has not been accomplished in him. M. Salvador afterwards contends, contrary to the opinion of the whole Christian Church, that it is materially false to pronounce the determining cause of the death of Jesus Christ to have been the result of a personal system of persecution and hatred; according to his view, it was the evident result of the difficulties and exigencies arising naturally from the situation in which the supreme council of Judea was then placed; and therefore, a similar violent condemnation could not have taken place in any other Sanhedrim. But, with reference to the exclusive character of the Messiah, attributed to the person of Jesus Christ, he maintains, that as the plans of the Creator of the Universe are much more profound than the designs of man, all the events (of the era of Jesus) have had at least one consequence, that of disposing the world to the adoration of one identical God, and of spreading among innumerable nations the foundation of the law, and thus preparing the way for the future Mediator of true Christianity. The tenor of the work can easily be understood from these few words on the subject. As to Dr. Strauss, his book is a mass of documents and reasonings in support of scepticism. It is a very learned production, but from the little we have seen of it, it seems to be too full of the deistical arguments and conclusions of the philosophers of the eighteenth century. M. Salvador, on the contrary,

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is more original in his investigations, and is often deeply interesting in his discourses; and his sincerity in the research of truth is always manifest. The German doctor aspires apparently to the caustic dryness of a sceptic philosopher. The characteristic of the latter, in truth, is scepticism, whilst in the former there reigns deep conviction. M. Salvador's book created a great sensation in the learned world; it has been commented upon by members of all sects, but with the expressions of esteem due to his probity, independence of opinion, and exemplary candor in acknowledging the sincerity and grandeur of the convictions of others. How desirable that this spirit of toleration were more generally exhibited in discussions on religious subjects!

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CHAPTER SEVENTH.

HISTORY—(Concluded).

Descriptive School of Historians.—M. de Barante—his History of the Dukes of Burgundy—Object and Character of the Work—Beauty of its Descriptions—its principal Features.—M. Daru—his History of Venice—Grandeur of the Subject—Character of the Work.—Account of the Venetian Constitution.—M. Daru's History of Brittany.—Versatility of M. Daru's Genius—Cuvier's Eloge.—M. Capefigue—his History of Philip Augustus—his other numerous Works.—General Tendency of M. Capefigue's Works—Novelty of his Historical Researches—his Style—Rashness of his Judgments.—M. Mazure's History of the Revolution of England in 1688.—Armand Carrel—his History of the Counter-Revolution in England.—Character and Merits of the Work.—M. Fauriel—his History of Southern Gaul—its Merits and Erudition.—Count Philippe de Segur's Historical Works.—Various Historical Works by M. Vitet, Count de Saint-Aulaire.—Laurentie.—Bazin.—Lavallée.—Henri Martin.—Michaud's History of the Crusades—that of Wilken and of Mr. Mills.—M. de Salvandy's History of Poland.—M. Delécluze's History of Florence.—M. Rossew St. Hilaire's History of Spain.—M. Matter's Works.—M. de Beaumont—his "Ireland, Social and Political"—Object and Superior Merits of the Work.—Military Historical Works—General Foy—General Jomini—Marshal Suchet—General Mathieu Dumas—General Pelet.—Memoirs—Mass of worthless Compositions under that Title.—M. de Stael's *Considérations sur la Revolution*.—Memoirs of the Duke of Saint-Simon.—Biography—M. de Walkenaer's Lives of Lafontaine and Horace.—M. Tasherau's Lives of Molière and Corneille.—M. Quatremère de Quincy's Lives of Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Canova.—*Biographie Universelle*—General View and Paramount Importance of History.

We have already intimated that the classification of historians into various sections and schools was opposed to our own ideas; but we find the method generally adopted, though without any substantial reason; for, as we have seen it observed by M. Augustin Thierry, there is no school, since neither master nor scholars are to be found. In fact, no two historians are alike; each has his peculiar system, views, and manner; and it is only in certain outlines, in a few points, that a similarity can be traced, sufficient to warrant such arbitrary approximation. At the same time, the character of M. de Barante's great work, the *History of the Dukes of Burgundy*, is so prominently marked, as fully to justify the distinction it has received of descriptive history. The celebrated History of Switzerland, by John Müller,

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is, however, entitled, we think, to be adduced as the first great model of this descriptive method in modern times. But the difficulty consists in marshalling under M. de Barante's standard any worthy and strict followers of his system; except M. Daru, the historian of Venice, we know of none, who, by his merits and essentially descriptive character, can be assimilated or ranked with the historian of the Dukes of Burgundy. M. Capefigue certainly partakes of the descriptive in his reproduction of old chronicles, which he arranges, dissects, and recasts in brilliant phraseology and imagery; but he has always a political object in view, and is deeply imbued with prejudices: no historian, in truth, can be more remote from the simple, elegant, and impartial manner of M. de Barante than M. Capefigue. We will therefore speak of M. de Barante and M. Daru as the only eminent writers of the descriptive school, abjuring all affected classification with regard to the remaining authors who will claim attention.

We have previously stated that M. de Barante's motto was, *Scribere ad narrandum non ad probandum.* "I have introduced no reflection," he says, "no judgment, on the events which I relate: . . . the judgment and reflections of the contemporaries were the things needful." Accordingly, he avoids the practice, adopted by the philosophic historians, of systematizing and generalizing—of tracing the operation of general causes. Far from filling his pages with discussions on doubtful or disputed points, he complains that the historians of his country have not rendered their compilations sufficiently attractive, although the contemporary materials which they have followed carry with them a charm of which all readers are sensible: in these documents the national character is fully personified. The writers convey, with their peculiarly shrewd and felicitous *naïveté*, in the very manner of their narration, a sense of the feeling which actuates them, as they record events which they themselves had witnessed. The whole of the French literature, observes M. de Barante, from the *fabliaux* and chronicles, down to Lafontaine and Hamilton, is marked with this stamp; it is always a narrative endeavoring to present a dramatic picture to the imagination, delighting in life and movement; leaving the reader to form his own inferences, approve or condemn at will, and uniting a sort of gentle irony with a spirit of impartial benevolence. He observes, also, that the French, although so rich in such excellent materials, have hitherto failed to make a right use of them; then, censuring those who would render history mainly

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instrumental for political instruction, he says we require from it facts simply—that we desire to regard the past as we see the present, in its details, in its movements; that these contain the lessons which every one may deduce for himself; that nothing is so impartial as the imagination; and that upon these views he has proceeded in his History of the Dukes of Burgundy.

Accordingly, M. de Barante, at a time when so few people will undertake to write, and still less to read, long works, shrunk not from compiling twelve volumes on a dynasty which lasted only through four reigns, and comprised a period of but 113 years (1364–1477). The event proved that he had not miscalculated in his expectations; for very few works have been so eminently successful. This popular reception was owing to the general character of the production. In the first place, the text is unaccompanied with illustrations, or any of those notes which are objects of dislike to the many. The authorities are merely indicated at the bottom of the page, so that light, general, and careless readers are not deterred by the appearance of erudition; a few passages comprise all the preliminary information which he has thought necessary; and there is nothing retrospective throughout the work. Then, M. de Barante tells his story in a lively, faithful strain—investigating nothing, explaining nothing, but selecting everything characteristic which to him appears important; he never stops its course to indulge in reflections; he presents to the reader a busy, active, vivid, narrative, which is as amusing and attractive as a romance, while it excites a worthier and more lofty interest.

M. de Barante had, moreover, the good taste to adapt his work to the national feelings of his countrymen; for in no country, perhaps, are all classes of persons so deeply national—so keenly alive to national topics—as in France. The History of the Dukes of Burgundy only includes the dukes of the Valois dynasty; but during that period they appear conspicuously in the affairs of France. The first part of the epoch treated, embraces that portion of French history in which the qualities of the nation are displayed to the best advantage, and during which, though it suffered one of its most signal defeats from the English, it nevertheless ultimately obtained important trophies from its adversaries. The latter part exhibits the successful policy of the most politic of the kings of France, in dismembering the estates of a formidable neighbor. In fact, the work of M. de Barante belongs to French history—to the most eventful portion of it—one touching which contemporary writers have left the

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greatest abundance of materials, and the details of which are admirably calculated to excite and gratify the patriotic feelings of a Frenchman. The history of the Dukes of Burgundy could not, therefore, fail to be a fortunate and popular subject; and, in the selection of it, the author showed a very judicious taste, whilst the manner in which he has accomplished the task he undertook has placed him in the highest rank among the great historians of the nineteenth century.

The narrative of M. de Barante opens, then, with a picture of France at the end of the fourteenth century, when the country had ceased to be governed as a feudal republic, and Charles V. had commenced the monarchy by enforcing some of the principles of a regular administration. But after his death, the effects of his sagacious policy were soon obliterated: Flanders rose in arms, England asserted her rights on Aquitaine, and Philip of Burgundy governed the kingdom in the interest of his own dominions. Amidst the general disorder, a proud and restless nobility gave free vent to its unruly and ruthless passions; and the people, goaded to desperation by ceaseless oppression, proclaimed their wrath in rebellious accents. It was in this state of things that the house of Burgundy founded the brilliant dominion it wielded for a space of one hundred and thirteen years, and during all the existence of which its history is intimately blended with that of France.

Nothing can be more dramatic than the account of the Flemish war, on which the historian first fixes our attention. Here he proves how far history, when truthful and animated, albeit precise and serious, can excel in interest the creations of romance. Sir Walter Scott has depicted, in *Quentin Durward*, with his usual felicity, the republican spirit of the citizens of Liege, and the determined valor they could evince for the preservation of their liberties. We all know that Sir Walter Scott's descriptions are rarely deficient in graphic power; and this is one of his best. Nevertheless, M. de Barante will be found far superior to him in his delineations of the same period. The frame of history is wider than that of romance; scenes and characters take a more comprehensive range, actions and characteristics are developed with greater strength and vigor. Thus the portraiture of the Liegeois, as drawn by Sir Walter Scott, falls short of that executed by M. de Barante; and the siege of the castle of Shonwalt is feeble, when compared with the battle in which 5000 men of Ghent, famished and emaciated, but fortified by ghostly exhortations and the administration of the sacraments,

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attacked and routed the formidable army of their sovereign. Again, the battle of Rosebecque, which proved so fatal to Flemish liberty, is impressed with the same vivid coloring. The first volume of the work is almost entirely taken up with such great and stirring events; then, another order of facts follows—the struggles and contests of parties, the intrigues of courtiers, and the devastations of petty and ferocious magnates in their internecine feuds. Thereafter, accompanying the chivalry of France into Hungary, he describes that last of the Crusades, and the crowning battle of Nicropolis, with admirable effect. So, likewise, when he returns to the troubled realm of France, and narrates the assassination of the Duke d'Orleans, he stamps such an air of reality upon the deed of blood, that the reader shudders as if he witnessed it; and the terrible incidents of the gloomy drama strike so forcibly upon the imagination, as to be with difficulty effaced. The fourth volume enters upon an exposition of the state of France, and of the ameliorations then generally exigible; in the course of which we behold Paris in possession of a turbulent and licentious populace, and dwell with complacency on the noble character of Juvenal des Ursins, the hero of the *bourgeoisie*, who, by his patriotic virtues and firmness of determination, rescues Paris from the vile thraldom in which the *sans-culottes* of those days, true to the spirit and passions evinced by the multitude at all periods, then held the metropolis of France. Towards the close, the din of arms is again heard, and we view the field of Azincourt strewed with the prostrate forms of noble and heroic champions—in itself a woeful spectacle, but yet more dismal to contemplate when we learn its consequences—the disorders and massacres that marked the fearful domination of the Burgundians in Paris.

The fifth and sixth volumes embrace events of paramount interest—the treaty of Troyes, whereby the rights of the royal blood of France were secured to the princes of England, speedily followed by the deaths of the two kings, principal actors in the drama, Henry V., of England, the victorious, and Charles the insane; the victories of Crevaut and Verneuil, which encouraged Bedford to proclaim the young King Henry VI. in Paris, whilst the indolence of Charles VII. daily tends to aggravate the wretched state of his affairs. The city of Orleans, the last bulwark, is nearly taken, and France seems on the very verge of ruin, when the sudden apparition of Jeanne d'Arc arrests the course of disaster. The deliverance of Orleans, the coronation of Charles at Rheims, the discomfiture of the English

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in sundry conflicts, the capture and death at the stake of the Maid of Orleans, occur in rapid succession: then commences the misunderstanding between the Duke of Bedford and the Duke of Burgundy, ultimately leading to the reconciliation of the latter with the King of France; and soon after, we behold the gates of Paris opened to Charles VII. From this cursory sketch, the deep and romantic interest inherently attached to this series of events may be inferred; and the adventitious graces of M. de Barante's freshness of coloring and glowing diction materially enhance it. He stamps upon the epoch its truthful lineaments, and from the facts themselves, as he exhibits them, we derive the conviction, that the permanent subjugation of France under English dominion was a catastrophe of impossible achievement. The Maid of Orleans, through whose mysterious agency France apparently was disenthralled from the foreign yoke, receives from the historian the prominent notice she merited; and in his portraiture of so extraordinary a personage, he has weighed with candor, conflicting testimonies, and observed a just equilibrium between the idolatrous incense of French, and the wrathful disparagement of English historians. He represents Jeanne d'Arc as a simple, open-hearted female, imbued with the prejudices, ideas, and feelings natural to the class in which she was born, and to the times in which she lived; and as mysticism and superstition were deeply engrafted on the age, the patriotic spirit that glowed within her caught the fire of religious enthusiasm. Springing from the ranks of the people, the influence she exercised was of a purely popular nature, and acted solely upon the commonalty; for in the estimation of knights and nobles she was an object of ridicule, and countenanced only as a useful instrument for kindling the zeal of boors and burghers. Several traits of her artless guile are chronicled by M. de Barante; and we feel a tendency to smile when we hear her denominate the foes she sought to vanquish by that peculiar appellation of *Goddems*, which it would seem the English had earned, nearly five centuries ago, on the continent of Europe, or observe the fanciful and ludicrous distortions in which she was wont to indulge, when mentioning the names of eminent captains in the English host.

In the following six volumes, we continue to wander in the fifteenth century. France is at last liberated from her enemies, and allowed to breathe somewhat freely. The historian has no longer warfare and battles to relate, until the close of the work; another kind of interest grows up in lieu thereof. The state of

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misery and exhaustion into which the country had been plunged by intestine discord and foreign invasion, affords a dolorous subject of contemplation; and the astuteness of Charles VII., in taking advantage of the general woe and feebleness to establish his power on a firm and absolute basis, stands forth a flagrant instance of kingly craft. The conduct of this monarch, indeed, exhibiting the arts whereby royalty contrives to rivet its chains on a nation, and to render its sway despotic, supplies a wholesome precedent, which, if useful to sovereigns intent on the same project, is equally so to communities exposed to the hazard. We learn from the history of his reign, by M. de Barante, to consider as erroneous the belief generally entertained, that his son, Louis XI., was the original founder of absolute monarchy in France. This latter prince, so famous for fraud and subtlety, is in his turn introduced to the reader, in startling contrast with his frank and chivalrous rival, Charles the Bold of Burgundy. The delineation of two characters so diametrically opposed to each other, is given in the author's happiest style, and is exceedingly graphic: in the one, we behold an odious combination of cunning, ambition, cruelty, avarice, and cowardice; in the other, a brilliant array of personal qualities, marred by the mischievous failings of impatience, recklessness, and obstinacy. In allusion to this latter defect of Charles, stubbornness of spirit, the historian uses the remarkable expression—"His mind, like his body on a day of battle, seemed encased in armor." He was, in truth, impervious to the counsels of prudence and reason; as the true representative of a dying species of potentates, the purely martial and heroic, the sword was the only argument he could wield or comprehend; and, urged by the impetuosity of his passions, he met an inglorious grave amid the plains of Lorraine. In Louis the Eleventh, on the contrary, we see the first of the modern race of kings—princes who rule and act from the recesses of cabinets, through the instrumentality of others, devising plans and laying trains thoughtfully and maturely; for although craft and perfidy were the favorite agencies of Louis, although his memory is deeply stained with crimes, he had the merit of effecting a great reformation in the mode of governing states, inasmuch as he substituted the principle of policy and management for that of force, the sole engine and appliance known or used before his time. The success which attended him throughout his reign, the rich dominions he annexed to the crown of France, including those of his warlike antagonist, Charles of Burgundy, attest at least the wisdom of his measures, however

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their villany and baseness may revolt the ingenuous mind. Whilst thus presenting, in such strongly marked distinction, the attributes, conduct, and fate of the two great rivals, who, during the fifteenth century, contended for mastery in the confines of ancient Gaul, the historian describes the occurrences of their epoch with his usual masterly effect. The concluding volume of his work, indeed, surpasses its predecessors in attractive beauties; for not only are the incidents of a stirring and diversified nature, but the style of narration is even more exquisitely adapted to each particular theme as it arises—the conflicts of antagonist hosts, the feats of warriors, the seditions of burghers, are all life, spirit, adventure, and animation; the intrigues and machinations of the wily Louis provoke a grave and didactic, though ever luminous strain; whilst the remorse, agony, and death of that prosperous but unhappy prince, move to the solemn and thrilling accents befitting examples of fearful retribution. Thus a work, combining so many excellences, and fitted to gratify so many tastes, could scarcely fail to secure that large measure of popularity so legitimately accorded to the admirable compilation of M. de Barante.

M. Daru has rendered signal services to historical science, and is entitled to occupy a high place among the historians of modern France. The subject he selected for inquiry and elucidation was most aptly chosen; for, amidst all the topics that might challenge an historian's regard, none surely could possess greater interest than the rise, grandeur, and fall of Venice. The existence of that celebrated republic, dating its origin from the invasion of Attila, and annihilated under that of Napoleon, includes one of the most striking dramatic periods of history. Emerging from the bosom of the sea in the most dismal era of Italian annals —contending with the formidable element, at once her foe and her safeguard—gradually acquiring resources, and rising eventually to commercial and naval greatness—Venice stood for ages a calm spectator of the miseries that desolated the countries around her: the decay and ruin of the Roman empire she witnessed and accelerated; dynasties and nations flourished and crumbled before her eyes; but no change affected her; the ravages of war never approached her precincts; and, amidst all the revolutions that had befallen Europe, still she remained intact, the sole surviving relic of antiquity, the link between ancient and modern times, until her knell too was sounded, and in her turn she sunk into dependence and degradation. A more noble subject of contemplation, then, of admiring and mournful contem-

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plation, could not be imagined than Venice; but only they, perhaps, who, like ourselves, have glided along her rippling thoroughfares, gazed on the wrecks and memories of her faded magnificence and grandeur, and felt all those deep, rapturous, solemn emotions naturally aroused by such a spectacle, will share the fervor of our gratitude towards M. Daru for the zeal and perseverance he has manifested in dispelling the mystery and obscurity that had hitherto enveloped the history of this Palmyra of the seas.

The dawn of modern civilization broke with the early liberty and commerce of Venice. In the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Crusaders were fain to solicit the maritime co-operation of her who was already become the mistress of the Adriatic. The success of the expedition against the Greek empire, crowned by the conquest of Constantinople, poured the treasures of the East into the lap of Venice; and the trophies of Grecian art were borne away to adorn her seat of empire. With this conquest commenced her meridian splendor, and her star continued in the ascendant for three hundred years. Her whole history bears a peculiar and striking character. Her deadly rivalry with Genoa—her heroic resistance against all enemies, Moslem or Christian—her singular dominion over a great part of Lombardy—the envy and hatred she excited in other nations—all these are circumstances of great historical attraction. But the subject of deepest interest in the history of Venice, is the constitution and policy of her government—the gloomiest system of veritable despotism ever devised or followed, under the pretended name of a republic; and yet it is marvellous to find that, under so ruthless and dark an administration, Venice was always distinguished for pleasure and gaiety, not only among the cities of Italy but of all Europe.

The jealousy of the Venetian government carefully withheld from the prying eye of investigation all insight into its resolutions and proceedings; no knowledge of them could be obtained so long as it existed; no Venetian even could gain access to the secret archives of the State, nor would any have dared to incur the resentment of the vindictive oligarchy. All that could be learnt was derived from the partial researches of foreigners, who were enabled to glean only such details as the cautious subserviency or imperfect knowledge of native writers permitted them to publish. From the beginning of the sixteenth century, it is true, the republic maintained an official historiographer, but merely to minister to her pride; for although that situation was occasion-

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ally occupied by men of learning, we must not seek the true history of Venice in their parasitical records. Even the Abbé Langier, a foreigner, had the baseness to defend the tyranny of the government in the most slavish spirit; yet his History of Venice has been extolled, though abounding with the grossest misrepresentations. The learned Sandi detected many of its errors, but was stopped by the Inquisition; his History of Venice, such as it was, although containing little or nothing of the annals of the State, was the least imperfect. However, the time arrived when the fearful recesses of Venetian despotism might be securely investigated. The most secret records of the extinguished State have been exhibited to the eyes of the curious; and, whatever opinion may be entertained of the spoliations of the French revolutionists, it cannot be regretted that the removal of the republican archives has furnished the means of compiling a complete and faithful record of Venetian history.

This is the service performed by Count Daru. Occupying an eminent post in the administrative department of Napoleon's armies, he had opportunities of consulting a far greater number of authentic documents than any other historian could have found. He not only enjoyed free access to all secret archives, wherever preserved, but he had those of Venice carefully removed to Paris after an assiduous search, and his efforts were indefatigable in collecting such further materials as the great libraries of the continent afforded. Thus, he has accumulated notices in his appendix on nearly four thousand manuscripts, above half of which he declares he has personally inspected; while, for the account of the remainder, he stands indebted to different librarians, or to his secretaries. All the authorities on which his labors have been founded are collected in his last volumes, and form an admirable catalogue *raisonné;* he has facilitated inquiries into his own accuracy; and the historical student is guided to various original sources of information. But M. Daru's highest claims to esteem and commendation, rest on the judgment and ability which he has displayed in his use of these materials. His work has been subjected to the most rigid scrutiny, and the result of the ordeal tended to establish yet more firmly the conviction of his indefatigable industry, accuracy, good sense, and talents. A deficiency of warmth and animation is, at the same time, perceptible in this valuable history; and although it may be argued that coldness of spirit is a security for stern fidelity in the relation of facts, yet fervency of feeling and enthusiasm are not necessarily incompatible with that merit. M. Daru's style will perhaps grate some-

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what unpleasantly on the ears of many readers; there is a plainness and severity about it, very remote from the manner of French writers in general, particularly in the nineteenth century; his narrative, too, is broken into abrupt divisions of paragraphs and sections; and, upon the whole, we are often reminded of the stately precision of the annalist, and the austere manner of Muratori. It is to be remarked, however, that the historian loses his impartiality and coolness of judgment, as well as his character of a descriptive historian, when he labors to justify the conduct of the French government with regard to the final annihilation of Venetian independence. There is certainly little to regret in the extinction of a corrupt and cowardly oligarchy; but the perfidy that prepared its downfall, and the violation of the rights of nations which marked that memorable work of destruction, are not the less atrocious and indefensible.

The history of the constitution under which Venice was so long ruled—a subject previously shrouded in the deepest mystery—forms the most curious and valuable part of M. Daru's work. The institution of the Great Council, the establishment of the Council of Ten, and of the Inquisition of State, are perfectly explained, both as to their origin and purpose. The Inquisition of State completed the fabric of the Venetian government, as it continued to the last days of the republic. The members of this terrible tribunal rendered no account whatever of their magistracy; the power they wielded over the State, and the secret jurisdiction they exercised, were equally unlimited; their sentences were restrained by no forms, and the execution of them so buried in oblivion, that the blood which they shed was without a trace. The action of these inquisitors, who formed a committee of three, chosen from the Council of Ten, constituting the innermost wheel of an infernal machinery, exhibits, in the perfection of operation, the most iniquitous political system, which, under the guise of republican freedom, was ever contrived for the delusion of mankind. To the learned researches and discoveries of Count Daru, the world is indebted for a full exposure of the principles of a tyranny, whose nature and attributes were previously known only through its terrific results: all that had been written on the subject before was erroneous, the statutes which regulated the government being altogether unknown.

The History of Venice established M. Daru's reputation as an historian: a few years after its publication, in 1826, he gave to the public his *Histoire de Bretagne*, a work distinguished by the same perseverance and patient research which impart such value

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to the former. The reproach addressed to the History of Venice, of being wanting in warmth, is far more applicable to that of Brittany; in the latter, it is truly a defect; and the eight volumes which compose it, may be said to present only an outline of facts diligently collected and disposed in chronological order. We will not, however, ponder on the History of Brittany; what has been stated touching that of Venice will serve sufficiently to characterize the author; and this, moreover, far excels the other in importance and novelty. But to render the full measure of justice to M. Daru as a highly accomplished literary man, gifted with an intellect remarkable for its versatility, we must state, that he ever found all the charms of relaxation in poetical pursuits. He is the author of a very able translation of Horace; and in his poem on *Astronomy*, he proves that metrical music and sweetness may be made instrumental to the explanation and illustration of even abstruse science. M. Daru belonged to the *Académie Française*, and at his death, M. de Lamartine was elected to the vacant seat. When, in April 1830, at the usual inaugural ceremony, M. de Lamartine delivered the accustomed oration, in his eulogium on the deceased member whom he was appointed to succeed, he failed to extol, in adequate terms, the great and universal capacity of M. Daru; he spoke too much like one incapable of regarding any other than poetical attainments; and, as a poet, he was doubtless well qualified to enlarge on so congenial, but, under the circumstances, too exclusive a theme. However, the illustrious Cuvier, who was charged by the *Académie* to answer the new member, instead of devoting the principal part of his discourse to encomiums on the works of M. de Lamartine—to a laudatory exposition of the claims that had induced his election, according to the invariable custom observed in such cases—dwelt chiefly, in his reply, on the acquirements and performances of Count Daru, which had received so niggardly a notice from the self-sufficient poet. No greater homage could have been rendered to the memory of Daru than the emphatic praise of Cuvier, who pronounced him to have been an upright, efficient administrator, an excellent poet, and a great historian.

M. Capefigue is one of the most prolific writers of the day. His first work, and probably his best, published previous to the revolution of July, was a *History of Philippe Auguste*, under which title he embraces the whole history of France during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and certainly presents a very admirable picture of those times. He portrays, in just but severe terms, the character and policy of Philip Augustus: one striking

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passage will exemplify the remark. He says of that monarch—"It is difficult to discover in him a great and energetic principle, or one removed from that brute instinct of force which animated all the princes of this epoch. He had no settled plan, nor was he moved by generous and political ideas, in his concessions to the boroughs and the *bourgeoisie*." Notwithstanding the harshness of the judgment thus passed on Philip Augustus and his contemporary potentates, which somewhat partakes of the undiscriminating censures applied to all mediæval kings by M. de Sismondi, M. Capefigue rarely indulges in this condemnatory strain; for, unlike all his other productions, this work is distinguished by a calm and measured tone, by a general character of impartiality and dignity, from which he grossly deviates in subsequent compilations. Previous to the catastrophe of 1830, M. Capefigue's attention was almost wholly absorbed by certain administrative functions he held under government, and by co-operative labors in the periodical press, at which period he enjoyed the reputation of a man of talent, frank and conciliatory in his manners and disposition. After the revolution of 1830, finding himself relieved from the burden of official employment, he devoted all the energies of his mind to historical pursuits, and with such remarkable zeal, that, in the interval from 1830 to 1840, he has composed an incredible number of volumes on various interesting portions of French history. A mere enumeration of his works, in the order in which they appeared, will show his amazing industry:—A *History of the Restoration*, in ten volumes, which was originally published anonymously, and stated, pompously enough, to be "by a statesman;" a *History of France in the Middle Ages*, from the death of Philip Augustus to that of Louis XI., in four volumes; *On the Reformation, the League, and the reign of Henri IV.*, in eight volumes; *Richelieu, Mazarin et la Fronde*, in eight volumes; *Louis XIV., his Government and Foreign Policy*, in six volumes; *Hugues Capet*, four volumes; *Philippe d'Orléans, Régent de France*, in two volumes; and lastly, *Europe during the Consulate and Empire of Napoleon*, in ten volumes. He is, moreover, the author of a History of the Jews, and of a History of Saint-Vincent de Paul, both less known, and written long before he undertook these great labors on the history of France.

All the voluminous works of M. Capefigue which we have just mentioned, breathe the same spirit; the same order of ideas belongs to all—a constant bias in favor of aristocracy and Papacy. To vindicate and extenuate the past state of things, to deplore and rail at the present, seems the paramount and engrossing ob-

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ject of the historian. According to M. Capefigue, we ought grievously to lament the downfall of feudalism, which, in its chivalric features and baronial grandeur, is preferable to the monotony and equality of these days. In his work on the League and Henry IV., he dwells with admiring complacency on the banners of the citizens bearing images of the Virgin and of the patron saints. He views Roman Catholicism as the great conservative institution, and the Reformation as an impious innovation, which, in its effects, has tended to deteriorate, unsettle, and subvert society. In the history of Richelieu, his affections and sympathies are all enlisted in favor of the haughty magnates stricken and levelled by the implacable policy of the old cardinal. He stands over the ruins of his adored aristocracy, and discusses, with many a sigh, the causes that have led to this dismal change—this overthrow of a sacred and venerable fabric. It cannot be denied that in this mournful and sympathetic tone, there is something pleasing, and that it lends a charm to his descriptions of past ages; for, it is well known, he writes most effectively whose feelings are warmly engaged in his subject. Accordingly, all the pictures drawn by M. Capefigue of the middle ages, are singularly impressive and dramatic; but it is only the surface of society he skims along; palaces, castles, and cathedrals, are his favorite places of resort, and their lordly and priestly occupants the exclusive subjects of contemplation; for upon the condition of the inferior classes he never condescends to cast a glance.

M. Capefigue's remarks on the political character of Richelieu are unquestionably sound and valuable, and his account of the *Fronde* is also to be commended. The ideas he develops on this subject, both as regards the spirit of the times and the political influences at work, are curious and novel; and he adduces a variety of important documents, previously unknown or neglected, which give a totally new aspect to that memorable insurrectionary movement. Indeed, the industry of M. Capefigue in seeking out new authorities, is observable in most of his works; no historian has labored more diligently to obtain and produce materials that had hitherto escaped the notice of inquirers; but we fear they are too often rendered subservient to his prejudices, and to the peculiar views he entertains on all matters, social, political, and ecclesiastical. In fact, the zeal which prompts his researches into musty and forgotten records, probably arises in a great measure from the more notorious sources of information being hostile to his ideas and theories, for there is no doubt that he rejects very unceremoniously many accredited testimonies.

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Another egregious defect of M. Capefigue is the ridiculous excess into which his love of effect, of brilliant description, leads him, insomuch that his style often degenerates into pure burlesque. If our space permitted, we might cite numerous examples of his offences against good taste and the dignity of history, which would assuredly startle any one unacquainted with his works.

It is also our unpleasant duty to remark, that M. Capefigue evinces very little respect for the rules of syntax. He often proves that his regard for grammatical correctness is not greater than his reverence for historical truth; both are treated with the like lack of ceremony, both disregarded when they would fetter him in bombastic phraseology or hypothetical crudities. But that which chiefly arouses indignation against this historian, is the arrogance with which, in his notes and prefaces, he speaks of contemporary writers. In any circumstances, invidious observations on living authors are injudicious and censurable; but M. Capefigue contrives to render his detraction perfectly odious. He is at all times ready to lavish encomiums on the Benedictines, on Saint-Palaye, Descange, Mabillon, and others of that stamp, but showers upon the heads of all modern historians a plentiful vocabulary of abuse. He derides the immortal lectures of M. Guizot on the progress of civilization and of political institutions, placing them "among those childish reveries which have their day until displaced by fresh systems, which are in their turn lost in the incessant mobility of hues and shades." Of the illustrious Augustin Thierry, he says, that he has added neither an idea nor a fact to preceding investigations, and has shown himself a mere charlatan. M. Michelet, he asserts, "has not understood the Catholic principle, in his fantastic work on the history of France." Moreover, when he announced his *History of the Consulate and Empire of Napoleon*, he observed, with an evident allusion to Thiers and Mignet, that "no one, in treating the history of the revolution, had risen beyond the babblings of the assemblies, the petty reports of policemen, and the vulgarities of mobs."

The rashness of M. Capefigue's judgments, his acrimony against all those who refuse to share his antiquated and stagnant ideas, his contradictions, errors and exaggerations, really partake of the incredible. But, on the other hand, his extraordinary fecundity, the novelty and extent of his historical researches, his occasionally bold and keen glance on facts hitherto obscure, taken in conjunction with his often vivid eloquence and always original style, constitute merits of no ordinary degree, which partly

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justify his pretensions to historical fame and genius. Upon the whole, he may be pronounced the most singular, anomalous, and eccentric historian that ever existed. The voluminous works he has penned we shall abstain from alluding to more at large; we trust their main features and characteristics will be apparent from our cursory sketch, and all we will now venture to add is, that such historians are dangerous, and that readers ought to guard against their influence. The world should be severe with them, because the unbridled license they give to passions, albeit with an assumption of superior virtue and truthfulness, may not be tolerated. It is fruitless to object that certain books and authors fall by the weight of their own absurdity, and that when error, paradox, and audacity exceed all allowable limits, the common sense of mankind is a sufficient bulwark against their ascendancy, and that they may be safely left unnoticed. We hold a different opinion; and seeing that, in the present day, no imposture is too gross to be altogether devoid of a chance of success, that impudence and effrontery triumph where modesty and candor languish, and that M. Capefigue really possesses sundry merits, it is by no means impossible that he may come to exercise a baneful influence on the public mind. Therefore, to protest against his unsound and unwholesome doctrines, his unfounded conclusions, and his unscrupulous assertions, to warn others against being misled by them, however gilded with glittering tinsel or varnished with unctuous blandishment, we deem neither superfluous nor inconsistent with our assigned task.

Next in order we proceed to notice the single but valuable contributions to history of two writers, who have found in the annals of Great Britain fitting subjects for research and elucidation—MM. Mazure and Armand Carrel.

When Hume composed his history of the Stuarts, he was unacquainted with the stores of historical materials amassed at Paris in the archives of the Scotch College, and in the office of foreign affairs. Macpherson subjected those documents to a partial examination at a later date, and gave some extracts from them in his original papers; Clarke likewise made use of them in his Life of James II. Subsequently, Sir John Dalrymple, and finally Fox, when engaged with his History of James II., made strenuous exertions to procure the whole of those records. If, however, it were ever imagined that the sources of information thence to be derived were exhausted, M. Mazure has proved that such was very far from being the case. It must long have been a subject of regret in England, that no complete standard

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history of the great revolution wrought upon its soil, should be possessed by the nation; and a native of France benevolently and diligently prepared to supply the desideratum. M. Mazure entered upon a patient, laborious, and minute scrutiny of the mass of original documents contained in the archives of Paris and St. Germain, relative to the English revolution; and his researches were crowned with such success, he discovered so much previously unknown, that he threw all hesitation aside, and commenced with ardor to compile his *Histoire de la Révolution de* 1688 *en Angleterre*, which he published in 1825. The work is a creditable one; it bears obvious traces of great industry, learning, and ability; and certainly constitutes the best narrative of that celebrated event. Having, as we have stated, assiduously consulted every document and memorial to be found in the various collections of France, and scrupulously examined and collated all the English authorities, M. Mazure far surpasses his predecessors in the extent of authentic materials at his disposal; and it is sufficient to say that he has displayed the essential qualities of sagacity and discrimination in using them to the best advantage.

In 1823, Armand Carrel assisted with his sword the constitutionalists in Spain, and, after the ruin of their cause, he repaired to Paris, became secretary to M. Augustin Thierry, and subsequently established himself as a bookseller; eventually, his contributions to the daily press attracted the notice of the public, and raised his reputation to such a degree, that he was appointed chief editor of the *National*, a newspaper of ultra-liberal principles, which under his guidance attained an extraordinary height of popularity. But while a bookseller, the mind of Carrel could not remain inactive; and, in the absence of employment sufficient to absorb his time, he turned his attention to historical pursuits. "In a bookseller's back shop," says M. Nisard, in his interesting notice of Armand Carrel, "on a desk to which was fastened a large Newfoundland dog, Carrel, one moment absorbed in English memoirs and papers, another moment caressing his favorite animal, conceived and composed his *History of the Counter-Revolution in England.*" This work he completed and published in 1827. Taking into consideration the design and purpose of the author, his compilation may be deemed eminently successful, although appearing at a time distinguished for historical works of a more profound and philosophical character. It is a history of the two last Stuarts, portraying their attempts to re-establish Popery and arbitrary power, their temporary suc-

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cess, and final discomfiture by the Revolution of 1688. The subject was a favorite one at the moment, from its application to the situation and conduct of the two last Bourbons. Such a theme afforded Carrel a tempting opportunity for indulging the strong republican feelings he is stated to have possessed; but we find no trace of them in his work; on the contrary, he approves himself a candid and impartial historian—even too indulgent at times towards the Stuarts—and in his judgments so moderate and correct, that the partizan of despotism could himself scarcely quarrel with them. He evinces throughout his history a sound practical understanding, bent upon the detection of main operative causes; and in elucidating and following them up into their consequences, he confessedly displays great acumen and sagacity. The spirit of the modern historians, indeed, actuates him to a considerable extent. "Everywhere, and at all times," he says, "it is the wants of the era which have created the conventions called political principles, and those principles have always yielded to those wants as they arise." In another place, he says—"All questions as to forms of government have their data in the condition of society, and nowhere else."

This history of the English Restoration, by Armand Carrel, is concise, yet copious in its brevity. From his own knowledge and experience of turbulent and discontented periods, he has marked with admirable distinctness the fluctuations of public opinion in the course of the two reigns, and the remote or direct influences thereof on political vicissitudes. But, according to M. Nisard, one of the ablest critics of the day, the style of the work was not deemed prognostic of the reputation he afterwards acquired as a master of language; which reflects little credit on the judgment or foresight of the French public, inasmuch as it bears evident marks of the pen which was subsequently compared to a sword's point;* being clear, terse, pointed, brief, and energetic. It must be confessed, however, that it lacks the fertility of fancy which distinguished his articles in the *National*—an indispensable requisite to the attainment of high literary excellence, although when not under proper control, often productive of extravagance. When Carrel wrote his history, picturesqueness of style was the fashion of the day, and all imitators were straining after it; but he was no imitator, his mind was of too original a cast to be biassed by the fame or in-

* "*Il semblait ecrire avec une pointe d'acier*"—he seemed to write with the point of a sword—was repeatedly said of him.

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fluence of others, and he accordingly moulded his thoughts into such language as to himself seemed meet and suitable. The more fanciful and imaginative tendencies of Carrel appeared at a later date, first in his *Essays on the War of Spain*, and afterwards in the fulness of perfection in the columns of the *National*.

A modern French historian, not so generally known and studied as he deserves to be, is M. Fauriel, Professor of Foreign Literature at the Faculty of Letters of Paris. His great historical work is of a nature and on a subject not very attractive to the generality of readers; if, however, there was a school or a class of historians solely characterized as the profoundly erudite, M. Fauriel would rank among the first, as author of the *History of Southern Gaul under the Dominion of the German conquerors*. He has likewise explored a variety of other fields, both as a critic and historian, and in all his researches has evinced the same untiring zeal and perseverance. The East, the cradle of all past and present knowledge, ancient and modern Greece, the Roman world, Scandinavia and Western Europe, have all in turns occupied his attention and received illustration from his comprehensive learning. *Southern Gaul* is the great labor of his life, and he intends to enlarge this work by two others—one embracing the period antecedent to that originally treated, and the other the period subsequent thereto, until the thirteenth century. When these works are completed, they will form a grand historical aggregate, although each will separately constitute a whole in the special limits assigned to it. The four volumes of the *History of Southern Gaul* comprise the interval between the invasion of the Roman Empire by the barbarians and the dismemberment of the empire of the Franks under the last descendants of Charlemagne. This comprehends at once a very interesting and obscure portion of history: interesting, from the stupendous events included within it—the downfall of the Roman colossus, the universal diffusion of Christianity, and the birth of modern civilization; obscure, from the paucity and rudeness of its records and the almost inextricable confusion in which its annals are entangled. All is indeed a chaos, a world of darkness, in which the most piercing eye can only perceive glimmerings of light. Such is the period upon which M. Fauriel has brought the treasures of his erudition to bear, and he elucidates it in pure and simple language, detailing facts and working out results from his heterogeneous materials with singular acuteness and discernment. Perhaps he carries the quality of circumspec-

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tion to too great an excess, and hesitates unnecessarily to pronounce conclusions, his modesty and scrupulousness inducing him rather to doubt than to dogmatize; and herein he differs from most modern historians, who are too prone to indulge in rash hypotheses, too fond of what is called *systematizing*. In conclusion, it may be remarked that this work of M. Fauriel on Southern Gaul forms an integral portion, as it were, of the compilations of the two Thierries, each being the complement to the other. M. Amedée Thierry's recent publication of the *History of the Gauls under the Roman Dominion*, which had been impatiently expected by the lovers of historical lore, constitutes an important link in the series.

Besides the works we have enumerated on the history of France, composed by men of superior genius and talent, there are several others that bear somewhat of a secondary, imitative, or compiling character. Count Philippe de Ségur, for instance, whose memoir of the Russian campaign is so favorably known as a poetic and vivid narrative, is the author of a history of France, in ten volumes, as well as of various histories of ancient and modern times, all of a relatively elementary character, elegantly written, teeming with calm and sagacious judgments, and of general use in the University of France for educational purposes. M. de Ségur's life has been a noble one: ardently devoted to the honor of his country, he shared the fatigues and dangers of Napoleon's armies, and attained the rank of general in the service; during the long years of peace, he has always espoused with alacrity the cause of justice, reason, and liberty, in the Chamber of Peers, and exhibited an enlightened zeal in the prosecution of historical labors. His History of Charles VIII.,—of that chivalrous monarch who gathered the heritage of Louis XI., in whose reign feudalism practically expired and the modern system took root—is, in our opinion, the best specimen of M. de Ségur's manner as an historian.

In a different sphere, but still bearing on the history of France, we must not omit to notice the *Histoire des Anciennes Villes de France*, by M. Vitet, and the researches of M. Merimée on the cities of the South, both works forming a valuable and interesting appendix to Dulaure's book. Count de St. Aulaire's *Histoire de la Fronde* is also a very estimable work, written with an impartiality that has found few imitators among literary men of his rank; it is, however, almost forgotten since M. Capefigue's publication on the same subject, despite the merits of his style and his adherence to historical truth. The same may be said of

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M. Laurentie's *Histoire des Ducs d'Orleans.* M. Bazin's History of Louis XIII. has lately issued from the press, and been honored by a gold medal from the Académie Française. But there are two recent and able compilations on the history of France, which deserve especially to be commemorated in consequence of their utility to general readers, who may not have time to peruse and study the larger works: their authors are M. Théophile Lavall'e and M. Henri Martin. The former has compressed, with originality and discrimination, the great work of Sismondi into four volumes, also entitled *Histoire des Français;* not that he has confined himself to a servile imitation and abridgment, but has sublimated into lesser compass the spirit and science of the great historian. The latter, M. Henri Martin, in the twelve volumes of his *Histoire de France*, has produced a work of the same kind, but wider in scope and object: he follows and digests the labors of Guizot, Sismondi, Thierry, and De Barante, with skill, perspicuity, and judgment. We close our enumeration of the principal works on the history of France, with the collection entitled *Archives Curieuses de l'Histoire de France*, by Cimber et d'Anjou, being a selection of very rare, curious, and interesting pieces, published from the text, preserved in the archives of the kingdom and in the Royal Library. The two first series of the collection comprise about thirty volumes, containing documents, correspondences, and so forth, from the times of Louis XI., and intended to be brought down to those of Louis XVIII.

Other historians, who have extended their views to subjects unconnected with France or her history, are, generally speaking, distinguished for the attractive themes they have selected, and for the superior manner in which they have treated them. Michaud, the poet, author of the *Printemps d'un Proscrit*, and of the collection of memoirs and chronicles we have alluded to elsewhere, has composed a History of the Crusades. At the request of Madame Cottin, who was engaged in writing her celebrated novel of *Malehk Adhel*, he searched some materials on the Crusades to assist her design, and was eventually led to undertake a work on his own account, when he thus almost involuntarily found himself initiated into the subject. He accordingly published a *Histoire des Croisades* in 1826, about the same time that Friedrich Wilken enriched German literature with the best history of the Crusades that has ever been written. M. Michaud found in him a formidable rival, for the German historian far surpasses him in lucid clearness and sound learning. The French author is always graceful, fluent, and figurative, well suited to

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captivate the generality of imaginative readers; but he is sadly deficient in perspicuity and accuracy of description, insomuch that his accounts of battles, sieges, and other important occurrences, labor under the grievous defect of confused vagueness; his heroes, also, are unfaithfully depicted, being dressed too much in the modern garb: in fact, his work stands in striking and unfortunate contrast with the cold, sagacious, and erudite production of the German. Nevertheless, it is by no means devoid of merit, and a perusal will amply repay the time bestowed. As to the English historian of the Crusades, Mr. Mills, we are not among his admirers, however great may be his merits in the eyes of certain very able judges; we plead a repugnance to him, because he has not only adopted the same views as Voltaire and Gibbon, but has carried them to an extreme point: he takes Gibbon for his model in style and sentiment, but he imitates rather the blemishes, the obnoxious peculiarities, than the redeeming and eminent qualities of that great writer. Moreover, on a comparison of Mr. Mills's work with others on the same subject, it is impossible to avoid being struck by the want of research, the absence of enlarged philosophic views, and the frequency of mistakes as to oriental matters, which characterize it. M. Guizot is, of all historians, the one who has shown the Crusades in their truest and most original light.*

The *Histoire de la Pologne avant et sous le Roi Sobiesky*, by M. de Salvandy, is a work replete with facts, and abounding in passages well composed and brilliant; but, upon the whole, its style is too often declamatory and pompous, indicative of that hankering after effect which is the besetting and heinous offence of second-rate writers in this the nineteenth century. The character of Sobiesky is one of the best specimens of M. Salvandy's manner:—"It was Sobiesky," says the historian, "whose redoubtable arm planted a barrier that the power of the Osmanlis could never surmount. It was before his victories that the last invasion of the barbarians, previously so threatening and irresistible, spent its fury; since then, its tide has never ceased to recede. Warrior and prince, all his days were passed in the constant sacrifice of his inclinations, affections, fortune, and life, to the interests of Poland. He alone, her indefatigable champion, seemed occupied in defending her; his efforts to preserve to Poland her laws and frontiers partake of the marvellous. This passion swayed the whole course of his existence. He succeeded in defeating the enemies who held the republic of the

* Consult the eighth chapter of his History of Civilization in Europe.

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Jaghellons encompassed and invaded on all sides, more easily than in subduing those whom it contained within its pale. Eventually he expired; and, this powerful support withdrawn, Poland also in some sort prepared for the tomb. Under the successors of John III., her career was simply to hasten dissolution."

The History of Florence by M. Delécluze, teems with the effusions of a true lover of the fine arts, and of all that is beautiful and great. Florence, the city of Michael Angelo and of Dante, could not have found an historian more worthy of her fame. M. Delécluze was known, before the publication of this book, as the author of various brief and graceful romances, and of many excellent critiques on literature and the fine arts in the periodical press; but, after the appearance of his *Florence et ses Vicissitudes*, four or five years ago, a distinguished rank among the historians of the age was immediately assigned to him. His style, always elegant, easy, and fluent, is admirably adapted to his subject; nor does his admiration of Florentine art lead him to neglect historical investigation, for his work presents a brilliant tableau of Italian civilization during the middle ages.

French literature has long been barren of historical works on Spain; and the great work of Mariana, even if ably translated, could not supply the deficiency, at a time like the present, when the field of history has been so greatly extended. A young professor of the Sorbonne, M. Rossew St. Hilaire by name, having passed a considerable time in the Peninsula, diligently engaged in collecting materials, and examining the various manuscript records preserved at Seville, Granada, Saragossa, and elsewhere, has lately undertaken to confer on his country the gift of a good history of Spain; and he is even now pursuing his researches and labors on the subject with all the warmth of fresh-kindled zeal. The four volumes of his *Histoire d'Espagne* that have already appeared, have obtained from the public the reception they so richly merited; the profound learning and high descriptive powers manifested in them have aroused universal admiration. We have likewise an estimable history of Spain by M. Romey, in eight volumes, the last of which has only recently been published.

It is obvious that there must be many works, in the literature of a country, which cannot be placed in any special department, on account of the mixed nature of their subjects; whereby it is difficult to determine whether they belong more or less predominantly to the particular branch of history, philosophy, or politics. Of this character the works of M. J. Matter partake; whence it

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happens that although marked by great powers of mind, and replete with topics of commanding interest, they are confined to a narrow circle of readers. His compositions are respectively entitled *Histoire Universelle de l'Eglise Chrétienne; Histoire des Doctrines Morales et Politiques des Trois Derniers Siècles;* and *Influence des Lois sur les Mœurs, et des Mœurs sur les Lois.* But, in our present remarks, we have principally in view a recent production, which, from its own merits and the nature of its subject, has excited a more than ordinary sensation in the world; we allude to *l'Ireland, Politique et Sociale*, by M. Gustave de Beaumont. A few months previous to its publication, the same ground had been trodden by a certain pompous and light-headed personage, one M. Capo de Feuillide, whose name is familiar as the author of numerous contributions to the periodical press, and who, it seems, had been deputed by government on a special mission to examine the state of Ireland: a very inflated and exaggerated compilation was the result of his superficial scrutiny. M. Gustave de Beaumont's work is one of a very different character; the qualities that distinguish it are sagacity and impartiality of judgment, depth of investigation, and soundness of political knowledge; and it bears all the traces of its author's long intellectual association with M. de Tocqueville. The intimacy that has subsisted for so many years between these two eminent men, reflects equal honor on both, and cannot have been without a reciprocal influence, which, indeed, seems manifest in their works; the close union in which their hearts and minds are linked, presents a touching example of the sympathy by which congenial and superior spirits are drawn into affectionate communion.

M. de Beaumont had, during several years, devoted his attention to Ireland. Every authority, ancient or modern, that could assist him in his investigations, was consulted by him; and, moreover, the opinions of intelligent men of different parties were gathered and weighed by him; and having thus collected an abundant stock of information, and duly pondered it, he composed his four volumes on Ireland, which may be ranked among the productions that add the greatest lustre to the modern literature of France.

Many eminent writers have sought to ascertain the causes of the misfortunes of Ireland; others, thinking they had discovered these, have attempted to point out the means of alleviating or removing them: in both cases, however, without success. We will not venture to affirm that M. de Beaumont has resolved all

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the difficulties of the problem, but only that, being more impartial, and judging with a greater degree of freedom than inquirers, he has divined more accurately than they, and penetrated deeper into the questions at issue. M. de Beaumont perceived that many of the causes of the present state of Ireland were remote, and to be traced from former ages; and he consequently commences by giving a rapid summary of her history. This part of the work is very ably executed, and fully initiates the reader into the old grievances, sufferings, and resentments of the native Irish. He afterwards explains how the institutions of England and Ireland, although nearly similar at the present time, are beneficial and revered in the former country, while in the latter they are prejudicial and abhorred. According to M. de Beaumont, this difference arises from the peculiar circumstances affecting the respective countries, and principally from the English aristocracy having for ages taken the lead in defending the liberties of the country, extending its power, increasing its wealth, and having been at all times the highest expression of the national ideas, sentiments, and wants; whereas in Ireland, on the contrary, the aristocracy is alien both in blood and religion, and scarcely ever notices the mass of the nation but to gall and insult it. Herein lies, the author argues, the original source of evil; and taking this as the main basis of his inductions, he proceeds to investigate the other questions incidental to his subject, allowing himself, perhaps, to be too much swayed by the idea of having found a general principle, which in itself explains all the wrongs and calamities of Ireland; for it might easily be shown, notwithstanding the accumulated charges advanced by M. Beaumont against the Irish aristocracy, that Ireland has suffered many afflictions, of which the aristocracy, as a body, was wholly guiltless.

M. de Beaumont enters at large, as from the title of his work was to be expected, into the social, political, and religious state of Ireland; and although the views he develops may be combated, it is certain he states and supports them with a force of illustration that entitles them to candid and careful consideration. Agreeing, in many of his opinions, with the distinguished German, Von Raumer, whose work is familiar to the British public, he suggests sundry reforms, (particularly as regards agricultural tenures), which will doubtless receive adequate attention from those who are anxious to ameliorate the condition of the country. M. de Beaumont's publication has been noticed by several British and Irish reviews, and it is probably almost as well known

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in the United Kingdom as in France; and, whilst reflecting infinite credit on the literature of the latter country, it is calculated, we imagine, to confer benefit on the former, as embodying the impressions and deductions of an unprejudiced and enlightened foreigner, upon questions deeply interesting to all who have at heart the welfare and prosperity of the British empire.

From the martial spirit that has ever prevailed in France, and the long wars she has waged with the other powers of Europe, it will naturally be inferred, that her literature is peculiarly rich in military annals; and the fact really is so as regards quantity, though not perhaps as regards quality; for which there is the obvious reason, that men who have spent their lives in a camp, are unfitted to wield the pen so successfully as the sword. Xenophon, Cæsar, Napier, and Foy, are rare exceptions of warriors who have achieved fame both in arms and letters. Still there have been many emulators of their literary renown; and France possesses at the present moment a voluminous compilation, the product of co-operative labors by divers eminent soldiers and writers, entitled, *Victoires, Conquêtes, et Revers de l'Armée Française*, from the Revolution to the campaign preceding the Restoration, and comprising upwards of thirty volumes; but in a work of this contributory nature, there must needs be found manifold inequalities and imperfections, together with that confusion and want of connection, which detract so materially from the unity of character essential to successful literary efforts, and which is so conspicuous in Colonel Napier's History of the Peninsular War.

If General Foy had lived to complete his work on the same subject, it would doubtless have exhibited a like degree of excellence; for the portion in four volumes, published under the title of *Histoire de la Guerre de la Peninsule*, is executed in a masterly manner. The general's style is clear and rapid; his facts come from him with a freshness that shows he is not speaking from the details of bulletins and despatches, but from a vivid recollection of events in which he himself took part. His view of the civil policy and military system of Napoleon is singularly interesting and instructive. He seems to have thoroughly understood the character and genius of that extraordinary man, the nature of his plans, the means by which they were carried into effect, and the causes that ultimately led to his downfall. He manifests an intimate acquaintance with Spain and Portugal, and reveals many circumstances connected with their political and military condition that were previously unknown; he is stated, however, to have been less fortunate in regard to Eng-

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land, though he strove diligently to acquire a perfect comprehension of her institutions and military organization. General Foy's style is remarkable chiefly for perspicuity, elegance, and energy; it sometimes approaches the sublime, and always bears that forcible and effective character which distinguished his eloquence in the Chamber of Deputies. Yet, with all the qualities he possessed, befitting an historian of the Peninsular War, it is very doubtful that his work, even if completed, would have rivalled that of Colonel Napier. No military history, since the Commentaries of Cæsar, has appeared, comparable to the gallant Englishman's production; in keenness of observation, in comprehensive developments of general and accessory facts, in elevation of style, in justness and profundity of appreciation as regards both men and things, and in impartiality of relation, it stands unequalled, and in brilliant contrast with other works, which we shall forbear to particularize, that have issued from the English press on the war in Spain and Portugal.

Napoleon himself may be classed amongst those who have furnished fine models of military writing; an air of grandeur pervades all he dictated to the companions of his exile at St. Helena. Count de Ségur's dramatic memoir of the Russian campaign has already been incidentally mentioned; it provoked a bitter refutation from the pen of General Gourgaud. Eugène Labaume has likewise written a dull, heavy account of that fatal campaign, full of inveterate hostility towards the discomfited emperor. General Jomini, a Swiss by birth, who followed for many years the fortunes of France, and afterwards deserted to her enemies, has written a general history of the wars of the revolution, and a work entitled, *Napoleon au Tribunal de César et d'Alexandre*—a complete failure with regard to the object he had in view. His style of narrative is slow and cold, but his military knowledge and experience are highly esteemed. General Mathieu Dumas, who rendered his country the service of translating Colonel Napier's great work, has also related his own campaigns with talent and conscientiousness; and General Pelet has depicted, with force, method, and great animation, a memorable episode in that martial era, in his *Histoire de la Campagne de* 1809. The military and historical memoirs of Marshal Suchet, in which he gives an account of those Spanish campaigns that invested his name with such celebrity, are considered by all competent judges as useful studies for military men anxious to acquire a profound knowledge of their profession. The marshal's personal struggles and efforts, the incredible difficulties his

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army had so often to overcome, his dangers after so many heroic deeds and victories, are all delineated with great skill, clearness, and simplicity, which render the work one of the most valuable of its kind. But, with perhaps a few more exceptions, we feel bound to enter a warning protest against that flood of memoirs, military and civil, of public and private biographies, bearing on the events of the last fifty years, with which French literature has been inundated, and the nation shamefully imposed upon.

On this subject M. de Chateaubriand has made some characteristic remarks in the introduction to his *Etudes Historiques*. "There is no one," he says, "who does not think himself obliged to favor the world with an account of the influence he has exercised on the universe. All those who have passed from the porter's lodge to the antechamber, who have crawled upwards, who have listened at doorways, lustily proclaim and assert their importance, their integrity, their honor, and their independence. Cowardly treasons are transformed into sacrifices to the country. Then comes that mass of memoirs, more pitifully false; fabrications in which the life of man is sold by the yard—in which the workman, for the value of a scanty meal, throws into the gutter the fame that has been intrusted to his distress. Amidst this chaos of baseness and ignominy, there is, however, some consolation in finding a few conscientious works, whose authors endeavor to delineate sincerely what they have seen, felt, and experienced; the labors of those authors must be considered as precious materials for history. MM. de Las Cases and Gourgaud must be believed when they speak of the prisoner of St. Helena."

It is since 1815 that the French press has been so prolific in publications purporting to elucidate the history of the revolution and Napoleon. Some have undoubtedly opened new and valuable seams of information; but the majority seem to have been composed merely to supply for the moment the insatiable demand existing for books on those subjects and for light literature in general. With regard to the revolution, it might be supposed that the theme was exhausted; and yet scarcely a day passes but fresh announcements of compilations on the fertile topic meet our eyes. But when we inspect these flimsy productions, we turn with enhanced pleasure to the pages of Madame Roland and Madame de Staël, who have really written on the revolution, in fugitive pieces, as they may be considered, what may always be perused with delight and advantage. Especially the latter, in her *Considérations sur la Révolution*, impresses the reader with so high

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an opinion of her capacity, that he feels an emotion of regret she should not have applied her mind more extensively to historical studies. If we were called upon to justify our eulogium, we would without hesitation refer to her passages on Mirabeau, which are assuredly sparkling and admirable. "A tribune by calculation," she says of him, "an aristocrat by inclination, who, in speaking of Coligny, added, 'who, by the way, was my cousin,' so anxiously did he seek occasions to recall the fact of his noble descent." Her concluding words on the great demagogue likewise possess much beauty:—"I reproach myself for thus expressing regret on account of a character so little worthy of esteem; but such ability is so rare, and it is unhappily so probable that nothing similar will be witnessed during this generation, that one cannot restrain a sigh when death shuts its brazen gates on a man once so eloquent, so impassioned, so vigorously possessed of life." We presume we shall hardly be censured for transcribing in addition her paragraph on the fate of Robespierre:—"The man who had signed for a year and upwards an incalculable number of death-warrants, was seen stretched, weltering in blood, on the very table whereon he was wont to affix his signature to those fatal sentences. His jaw-bone was broken by a pistol shot; he could not even articulate to defend himself —he who had spoken so much in the cause of proscription."

With regard to the personal history of Napoleon, excepting a few individual and authentic reminiscences, there are no publications implicitly to be relied on, save such as he himself dictated, or such as were written by those who followed him to St. Helena. Repeating, therefore, our general caution against the multitude of memoirs, which, like a swarm of locusts, overspread the face of French literature, it is proper to remark at the same time, that this sweeping anathema applies only to such as relate to the scenes and actors of the revolutionary era, from 1789 to 1815, and has no reference to others of a different class and character, which, on the contrary, possess claims to recommendation. Of these the most remarkable are the *Mémoires du Duc de Saint-Simon.*

The Duke of Saint-Simon's memoirs treat of a distant period, but belong to the present age from the fact of their having been published in a complete form for the first time in 1829, in twenty-one volumes octavo. Thus the work may justly be considered a modern publication; and, when on the subject of historical memoirs, it would be an unpardonable omission to leave unnoticed a compilation of such great merit and importance. Its history is

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somewhat curious. When the Duke of Saint-Simon died, in 1755, the original manuscript of his memoirs, written entirely in his own hand, was deemed so valuable by his descendants, and the custody of it so delicate a matter, that they obtained permission to have it deposited and preserved in the archives of the State. They naturally continued to regard the manuscript as their property; and when all the persons mentioned in it were dead, and the difficulties previously felt were thus removed, various applications were made by the family for its restitution; but these were always waived, until, shortly after Louis XVI.'s accession to the throne, a renewed application led to an examination of the inestimable record, whereby it ultimately happened that an imperfect copy was surreptitiously given to the public. This examination was intrusted to an Abbé Voisenon, who made copious extracts from the document, and these being afterwards copied for the perusal of favored individuals, one of the copies fell, through the infidelity of a domestic or by some other agency, into the possession of persons who scrupled not to take advantage of the treachery, and to send the selection through the press about the beginning of the revolution. Two years afterwards, the Abbé Soulavie republished these extracts in better order, with considerable additions, which brought the work to twelve or thirteen volumes. These were the only versions of the memoirs in print, until the complete edition of 1829 appeared, for which the country was indebted to Louis XVIII.'s justice and liberality, since it was he who gave orders for the restitution of the whole manuscript to the Marquis de Saint-Simon, the author's descendant.

The historians who had access to these memoirs of the Duke of Saint-Simon in the archives, always spoke of them in high terms of admiration and esteem; but even they had not seen the whole. It was only when the complete edition was published in 1829, that the entire work, such as it came from the pen of the author, became known. The period embraced in the memoirs extends through part of the reign of Louis XIV. and the regency of the Duke of Orleans, and occurrences are related as they fell under the cognizance of the author or of his immediate communicants, in no particular order, and according to no prescribed system, but rather in the desultory manner befitting a work in which the provinces of the annalist, the historian, and the biographer, are so intimately blended. The style of the composition is forcible, keen, and elegant, and a vein of good sense and candor runs through it, which strongly enlists the sympathies of the

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reader in favor of its author, and induces him to place implicit confidence in his truth and accuracy. A comparison might perhaps be instituted between the Duke of Saint-Simon and Lord Clarendon, if the subjects of their respective records were not so very different; for the gloomy scenes of civil and religious strife but ill accord with the gay and brilliant aspect of affairs in the court of the Great Monarch or in that of the debauched regent. But if in their characteristics they vary so materially—if, to the solemn gravity and ponderous style of Lord Clarendon, there be opposed a light and cheerful tone, an attractive wit, a graceful style, albeit combined with sound sagacity and deep observation, on the part of the Duke of Saint-Simon, yet there is much in the form and manner of their compilations which, in perusing the one, reminds us of the other. In these two noble authors we think we perceive distinct representatives of the respective characters of the two countries; so that he who should wish to study the differences between them could scarcely find two works in which they are so strikingly portrayed; and in this respect more particularly we meant that a comparison might be appropriately instituted.

The great value of the Duke of Saint-Simon's memoirs consists in the light they throw not only upon the manners of society but upon several historical events and personages, concerning whom error and misconception had prevailed. Thus, for instance, the character of the Duke of Orleans is for the first time given in its true and natural colors. By all other writers that profligate regent has been described as a monster unredeemed by a single trait of virtue or probity; but we now learn to look upon him as one more than usually burdened with human sin and frailty, but yet not altogether devoid of qualities which, if duly nurtured in early life, might have rendered him an ornament instead of a disgrace to his country. The vices of the man are not the less odious and revolting, as depicted by M. de Saint-Simon; but we regard them more compassionately when we find them in some degree accounted for—the inevitable consequences, in fact, of a neglected and defective education—and we almost sympathize with his misfortunes even whilst abhorring his enormities. In him, indeed, are strikingly exemplified the evils entailed, not only upon the individual himself, but upon his age and nation, by the vicious education of a prince upon whom the destinies of a country may come to depend. Whilst thus alluding to the great merits of M. de Saint-Simon's memoirs, and the instructive lessons

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they convey, we regret our limits debar us from a more lengthened notice and analysis of them.

The department of biography has been embellished in the present age by many productions of great value and interest. M. de Walkenaër of the Institute, well known by his geographical labors, published several years ago a *History of the Life and Works of Lafontaine*, which is unquestionably the best biography of the great fabulist. The same learned author has lately favored the classical world with a work far superior to any other on the same subject, to which he had dedicated many years of his laborious life; it is a *History of the Life and Poems of Horace*, on a scale commensurate with the fame of that favorite of the Muses. This work belongs to the highest regions of criticism; it is a digest of all preceding commentators, of all that has been written by distinguished scholars on the Augustan bard, enriched by the fruits of the author's own profound observations and indefatigable studies. Though two enormous volumes, equivalent to six ordinary octavos, are devoted to one poet solely—to Horace—still the book is composed in so attractive a form, so diversified in its features and felicitous in its distributions, and, withal, is so full of interesting details on Roman manners, tastes, and habits, in the poet's times, that the instructive interest it inspires never flags. It may justly be pronounced a masterpiece of biography. M. Tashereau, who founded the *Revue Rétrospective*, which perished in the course of five or six years, like most undertakings of the kind in France, has conferred on his country biographical memoirs and criticisms on two of the greatest ornaments of French literature; his histories of the lives and works of Corneille and Molière, being executed with remarkable talent, have naturally attained a high degree of popularity—for France is very justly prouder than ever of those two immortal dramatists, now that so many abortive efforts daily testify the inaccessible elevation of their genius. M. Musset-Patay had long before written a nearly similar work on J. J. Rousseau; and a few years back, M. Onesyme Leroy published an *Essay on Ducis*, a very meritorious and useful book as to morality, because it very happily depicts the private virtues of the individual, but, in a literary point of view, we are concerned to state it is perfectly valueless. Ducis is well known to have been the dramatic caricature of Shakspeare; yet M. Leroy ventures occasionally to introduce some of Shakspeare's wonderful performances in juxtaposition with the wretched imitations of Ducis, and the nullity of his parallels may be inferred from an anecdote within our personal experience.

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In a private circle, where we had frequently the pleasure of meeting M. Onesyme Leroy, we chanced to speak of one of Shakspeare's plays, particularly mentioned and discussed, as it happened, in his own work, whereupon he remarked, with singular coolness, that he was unacquainted with the English language.

The principal works of M. Quartremère de Quincy are likewise biographical commentaries of standard merit. His histories of the lives and works of Raphael and Michael Angelo, are highly esteemed by all lovers of the fine arts; his taste and knowledge serve him as sure guides in his artificial investigations. It is, however, in his *History of the Life and Works of Canova*, his illustrious and beloved friend, that M. de Quincy shines to the greatest advantage, and his admiration of the genius and private virtues of the artist animates him to his noblest effort; the regrets of bereaved friendship throw a cast of melancholy over his dissertations, which lends to them an additional charm, while the chiselings of the immortal sculptor are delineated with enthusiasm.

But the greatest biographical monument of the present day, which, from its character and extent, forms, as it were, an era in that department of literature, is the *Biographie Universelle*, edited by Michaud, brother of the historian of the Crusades. It may be de-described as one of the most considerable literary enterprises undertaken in this century, and as executed in a manner worthy of all commendation. It was commenced in 1810, and reached in 1828 its fifty-second volume; and since that period, about ten supplementary volumes have been added. Such an undertaking cannot properly be said to belong to one age or country; it belongs to all nations and all ages; and it is to be regretted that it is not more universally known in foreign countries—in England, for instance, where it is confined to a comparatively narrow circle. The *Biographie Universelle* is the result of co-operative labors on the part of several distinguished writers of the present century; and although various elements have thus assisted in its composition, it is singularly free from all traces of confusion or inconsistency, which is to be attributed to the caution and discernment that presided over the distribution of its several parts; and, therefore, whilst possessing all the advantages of a combination of diversified talent and knowledge, it boasts a homogeneous character, as far as is feasible in a work of the kind. The different individuals selected as contributors entered upon their task with ardor and zeal for the success of the enterprise, and each received the articles best suited to his taste and habitual studies.

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An undertaking of this extensive nature cannot be accomplished by a very limited number of men, however comprehensive their powers and information. Alexander Chalmers, although he only added to and republished the *English Biographical Dictionary*, was not equal to the magnitude of such a work. The dictionary that now commonly bears his name was, we believe, first published in 1761, and, after several successive enlargements, a fresh edition was published by him in 1817; there are many defects and omissions in it, although Mr. Chalmers spent his life in collecting materials to perfect it; but, nevertheless, the compilation is a valuable one, and is calculated to afford great assistance in the preparation of works of a similar nature. The *Biographie Universelle*, notwithstanding a few errors, and the omission of some of the English theological writers, is the most complete publication of its kind. Mr. Hallam, alluding to it in the preface to his *History of the Literature of the Middle Ages*, says—"I must speak respectfully of a work to which I owe so much, and without which, probably, I should never have undertaken the present." If the German *Converzations Lexicon* (an avowed version of which in the English language exists, entitled the *American Encyclopædia*), that masterly production had been especially dedicated to biography, we should not have presumed to speak as we have done of the French work; but, from its more extended scope, and its condensation into sixteen volumes, however admirably edited, it is insufficient in many parts, and particularly in the biographical department.

We have now reached the point when we may terminate our observations on the state of historical studies in France during the present century. We have found them in the highest degree prosperous; and as history is cultivated in France, as in Germany, as one of the principal branches of education, it may naturally be expected that as a science it will continually increase in value and importance. We derive one paramount idea from an attentive consideration of the historical and philosophical labors of our epoch, namely, the idea of progress. We become more firmly impressed with the belief of the progressive nature of humanity, of its gradual advancement towards such perfection as may be attained by mortals, under the genial influence of civilization and Christianity, from the study and contemplation of the developments of society in the successive phases of history.

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CHAPTER EIGHTH.

ROMANCE.

Sir Walter Scott's Definition of the Romance and the Novel—his Observation on the Romances of the Middle Ages—Late Researches on the Subject.—Character of Sir Walter Scott's Novels—their Influence.—The French Novelists—Prospects of that Department of Literature.—Innovations in Style.—Tendency of the Modern School.—Influence and Character of Various Works at the Commencement of the Nineteenth Century.—M. de Chateaubriand's *René*.—M. de Sénancour's *Obermann*.—Byron's *Manfred*.—Goethe's *Faust* and *Werther*.—Madame de Stael's *Corinne*.—M. Victor Hugo's Works—*Bug-Jargal*—*Notre-Dame de Paris*—Characteristics of that Novel—its Principal Scenes—its Defects and Beauties.—M. Alfred de Vigny—his *Cinq-Mars*—Period of History it Illustrates—Character of the Work—its Closing Scene.—M. de Vigny's *Stello* and *Grandeur et Servitude Militaires*.—M. de Balzac—Variety of his Works—their Merits and Defects.—George Sand (Madame Dudevant)—Observations on that Novelist, and the Excesses of her first Works—Subsequent Changes—Different Character of her last Work.—Maritime Novels—their origin—their Appearance in America, England, and France.—M. Eugène Sue—Character of his Works—their Tendency.—M. Corbière.—M. Lecomte.—M. Frederic Soulié—his Historical Novels—his *Mémoires du Diable*—their Object and Style.—M. de Salvandy.—M. Saintine.—M. Alfred de Musset.—M. Alphonse Karr.—M. Alexandre Dumas.—M. Charles de Bernard.—M. Léon Gozlan.—Bibliophile Jacob.—M. Sainte-Beuve.—De Stendhal.—M. Emile Souvestre.—M. Charles Nodier—Versatility of his Intellect—his Various Works.—M. Merimée.—M. Edgar Quinet.—Paul de Kock.—Group of Secondary Novelists.—General View of that Department of the Literature of France.

UNDER the denomination of Romance, we intend to class and consider all the works of fiction that hold any rank in modern French literature, although the distinction that exists between a romance and a novel is clearly established. Sir Walter Scott, in his Essay on *Chivalry, Romance, and the Drama*, observes, that a romance is a fictitious narrative, the interest of which turns upon marvellous and uncommon incidents; and that a novel is also a fictitious narrative, but differing from the romance, because accommodated to the ordinary train of human events, and especially to the modern state of society. This distinction we consider as one which modern usage sanctions; but we shall not observe any classification founded on it in our remarks on the French novelists: any division of them into classes would be of no utility, and merely productive of confusion, be-

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cause the same name would frequently be found in each department, and others again which could be ranked in neither. We purpose, moreover, to speak of the French novelists, not according to their literary merit, but as far as possible, according to their popular influence.

Sir Walter Scott says, in his admirable essay, that, in every point of view, France must be considered as the country where chivalry and romance flourished in the highest perfection; and that the originals of almost all the early romances, whether in prose or in verse, whether relating to the history of Arthur or Charlemagne, are to be found in the French language, whereas other countries possess only translations of them. They both—originals and translations—very early fixed the attention of that illustrious writer. But it is only of late years that those monuments of the middle ages, so valuable to philologists, have been the subject of serious study and investigation. The publications of M. Francisque Michel and M. Jubinal on Anglo-Norman, ordered by the Minister of Public Instruction, are well known; and those of MM. Raynouard and De la Rue on the Romance language, have been justly regarded with admiration by the antiquaries of all countries. MM. Leroux de Lincy and Paulin Paris have also rendered great service to philology, by bringing to light many literary productions of the chivalrous ages; and such studies have been additionally facilitated by the late work of M. Thommerel on the Fusion of the Franco-Norman and Anglo-Saxon. If any parallel between the present epoch and the middle ages were admissible, we might remark upon the contrast discernible in the lighter literature of the respective periods. What will be thought hereafter of the mass of French romances of our time? What a source of error and corruption as to language and history most of them must be, if future ages adopt them, without the greatest caution and discrimination, as authorities on historical points, or as pictures of manners! France, since the time of Lesage and his inimitable *Gil-Blas*, has scarcely produced any standard work, which, like *Gil-Blas* and the creations of Sir Walter Scott, will descend as a literary monument of its age. The works of the Scottish novelist, on the contrary, will ever remain a source of delight and an incentive to historical pursuits.

Although historical novels certainly existed before Sir Walter Scott, he was altogether original with regard to his peculiar style of historical novels, and was the undoubted founder of a new school of literature. He was the first to embody the spirit of

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past times, to bring before us the costumes, the habits of life, and in some degree the motives of action, in ages to which, in these essential particulars, we were utter strangers. Previous to the publication of *Ivanhoe*, it was scarcely suspected by any but professed antiquaries, that, in the reign of the Plantagenets, England contained a race of helots—strangers in the land of their nativity—enslaved to foreign lords, who scourged and plundered them at pleasure. Still, notwithstanding our great admiration of his genius, we must acknowledge that he did not accomplish the important revolution he had the glory of commencing. Although very superior in his descriptions of institutions and manners, he traced but feebly their effects, and seldom investigated their causes. Imbued with a blind respect for chivalry, and with deep aristocratic prejudices, he viewed the feudal ages through those delusive mediums, and pardoned the horrors of vassalage for the imaginary graces of knighthood. It is well known that historical characters are often grossly misrepresented in his novels: thus, the ferocious Plantagenet, the lion-hearted Richard, merciless in war, undutiful to his father, perfidious in peace, and tyrannical to his subjects—Richard becomes an amiable monarch, who merely prefers perilous adventures to the honors of royalty; thus, James I., that pedantic despot, the cowardly murderer of Raleigh, is represented as a good-natured sovereign, with a few harmless eccentricities; even the moral monster Louis XI. does not pass without apologies. The fact is, that Sir Walter Scott would not investigate too closely any object of his partiality; and all persons possessed of rank and power were regarded by him with especial favor and reverence.

The field discovered and cultivated by Sir Walter Scott was entered at his death by three living writers, James, Grattan, and Bulwer, who, following the bent of their respective inclinations, have each struck out a path for himself. In France, he gave rise to a school productive of a small number of highly estimable works, but also of a multitude of parodies, distorted by every species of affectation and excess. Numerous obscure writers, to prove that they are children of Young France—men without prejudices—who know everything, and for whom no error or deception exists—parade scepticism and licentiousness on the one hand, despair and defiance on the other. They often prostitute the sacred name of God, irreverently introducing it into their immoral dramas or novels, under some wretched pretence, belied by the whole tenor of their writings, of upholding religion and morality; for even they feel that the age of infidelity is

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passing away, and that the truths of Christianity have taken too strong a hold of the instructed portion of mankind to be covertly assailed without some show, at least, of partaking their belief.

France has, since 1830, been called *La Jeune France*, and it is indeed in this department of her literature and in the drama that she is young; and, like the young, is unruly and undiscerning, confounding good and evil, unconscious of right and wrong. Still, amidst the numberless detestable novels and romances that have deluged France during these last ten years (for the mania rose to no height during the Empire and Restoration), many productions are to be found, of great merit, and some even of superior excellence. It is of these only that we intend to speak in our present dissertation, for it would be impossible, were we even so inclined, to notice the great mass of such works; we must be content to cull the flowers that bloom in contrasting beauty from out the wilderness of rank and noxious weeds.

By one characteristic all the novels of the present day, good, bad, and indifferent, are alike distinguished, namely, by a certain peculiarity and novelty of style. And if, in the majority of instances, sad and fantastic pranks have been played with phraseology, yet, by the better class of writers, a more versatile and expressive character has been imparted to the French language than it could previously boast. French literature has at all times possessed authors writing with clearness, elegance, fluency, and force; but whilst many of the moderns are eminent for the classic purity and precision of their diction, others have introduced an easy, racy, and picturesque style of writing, which has all the merit of invention. As usual, however, deplorable excesses have resulted from the innovation, not alone in the herd of imitators, who vie with each other in convulsive and distorted expressions, but in the great originators themselves. More particularly, Victor Hugo has strained his faculties to discover bold and startling illustrations, to fabricate new words, and to overlay ideas with a sort of marvellous gigantic imagery; but, whilst thus seeking, at times, to embody extravagant conceptions in language of an analogous character, his descriptions are in general unequalled for their vivid and graphic power. The same remark is applicable in a less degree to M. de Balzac, and to other celebrated novelists, whom we shall hereafter have more occasion particularly to notice. In Victor Hugo and in all of them, great force and brilliancy of style is the general characteristic, occasionally disfigured by ill-timed fancies, over-wrought passages, and far-fetched tropes and similes. M. de Vigny is

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however to be excepted, since he never deviates from good taste and propriety. That untranslateable character which, it has been observed, the French language is daily more and more assuming, belongs especially to those writers, insomuch that a foreign reader, unless intimately conversant with the tongue, the manners, and the society of France, can never fully comprehend those beauties that have ensured them so high a degree of popularity in their native country.

The commencement of the nineteenth century was marked by the appearance of three or four works that created a great sensation at the time, and have called up many imitations—*Atala* and *René*, by M. de Chateaubriand; *Corinne*, by Madame de Staël; and *Obermann*, by M. de Sénancour. Goëthe's *Werther*, moreover, when translated into French, gave rise to a delirious school of writers. The story of Atala presents an affecting example of fanaticism amidst the deserts of the New World, but related in very extravagant language, with a multitude of exaggerated images and metaphors. *René* may be considered as the finest specimen of M. de Chateaubriand's style and genius. *René* is the personification of one of those moral maladies which so often assail human nature, blighting all freshness and vigor in the soul. René is the type of morbid reverie—of the bitterness resulting from social inaction, blended with a proud scorn and self-satisfaction; his haughty and solitary soul finds in disdain an inexplicable source of superiority over all men and things. Obermann, whose influence was not so universal as that of René, being confined, in effect, to the higher order of thoughtful readers, writes in a series of letters the history of his soul. He also reveals his profound melancholy—his sceptical inclinations—his doubts—his misery in his Alpine solitude. He nevertheless differs from René: the latter is meant as the personification of genius devoid of volition and energy; the former, on the contrary, that of moral elevation devoid of genius—he is depicted as a man of feeling, tortured by the absence of the means and stimulus of action. René, so gloomy, pensive, and desponding, yet so lofty and scornful in the consciousness of genius, has exercised a pernicious influence: all the dissatisfied minds of a youthful, idle, and ambitious generation, have fancied themselves represented in this creation, which although in prose, belongs to the loftiest regions of poetry. Neither Obermann nor René, however, can be compared to those celebrated types of mental anguish—Faust, Manfred, Childe Harold, Conrad, and Lara, though Lord Byron was, to a certain extent, inspired by the French and German

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productions. In all these pictures of psychological cravings and torments, we find a symbolic difference: in Faust, it is the vertigo of intellectual ambition; in Manfred, it is the insatiable thirst of forbidden knowledge; in Childe Harold, the bitterness of satiety and disappointment; in Conrad, disgust for social life and a longing after activity; and, lastly, in Lara, the remorse of a great soul that had hoped to find in crime a development of its powers. Obermann, on the contrary, eternally laments and deplores the unknown, inscrutable, unfathomable nature of his own mind, its unprofitable aspirations, its powerless ardor; his soul is ascetic and gnawed by the worm of doubt, and this betrays his feebleness instead of marking his audacity. René, again, is like the soaring eagle stricken to the earth, but retaining its sense of supremacy, writhing in agony, but darting defiance on all around.

Atala, *René*, and *Corinne*, co-operated powerfully towards the literary revolution of the nineteenth century. The two first are episodes in a work of fiction called *Les Natchez*, and published before it. Nevertheless, *Les Natchez* was coolly received; this romantic picture of savage life, being yet more elaborated and exaggerated in its descriptions than *Atala*, never gained popularity, and was soon forgotten; while the episode of *René*, and its philosophical idea, will remain as a model in French literature. *Corinne* has likewise been a general favorite, and more so abroad than any other French work of the kind. The beauty of its style, the affecting scenes and incidents so exquisitely recorded, and the deep reflections interspersed on the human heart, are unfortunately impaired in effect by the faulty structure of the tale, by the unnatural ideas and passages with which it abounds, and by the sense of annoyance which the unaccountable conduct of its chief characters leaves on the mind. *Corinne* is nevertheless a brilliant symbolic illustration of the pangs of the man of imagination and genius in the midst of society; the elevation of Lord Nelvil's thoughts, and the nature of his feelings, render him an isolated being in the world. Corinne, like all superior intellects, is not understood, and dies forsaken; she expires, her eyes fixed on heaven—the fitting abode of superior spirits.

The work of fiction that, during the present century, has excited the greatest interest in France, after those above named, is the *Notre-Dame de Paris* of M. Victor Hugo. But, before commencing our observations on this romance, it will be proper, perhaps, to give a cursory account of the author and of his pre-

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ceding works; for there are few men in the present day who exercise so powerful a sway over the literature of their country as M. Victor Hugo. Equally as a dramatist, a lyric poet, and a novelist, he has attained celebrity; exhibiting in all his compositions a singular compound of genius and extravagance. Like all men who occupy a high literary position, the opinions of contemporaries are strangely divided respecting him: on the one hand, he is assailed with the fiercest vituperation, on the other, he is extolled with boundless enthusiasm.

Victor Hugo is the son of a general of some distinction in the service, and was born in 1802. Several years of his youth were passed in Spain, and his mind has always preserved a tint of the Gothic and Moorish spirit of that land. Upon repairing to Paris, he early distinguished himself by poetical essays, and by the laurels he gathered in the course of his attendance at the university. In 1822, he published the first volume of his Odes, and during the same year entered the bonds of wedlock. In 1823, he gave to the public his first prose work, *Hans d'Islande*, a monstrous creation in the form of a romance. The second volume of his *Odes et Ballades* appeared in 1824; the third in 1826, in which latter year was published *Bug-Jargal*, a simple and affecting tale of the Negro Rebellion at St. Domingo, and which he had partly written when yet a boy. The story is related by a captain who had been the friend of the heroic Negro, Bug-Jargal; and many of the scenes are natural and skilfully sketched. The sentimental part of the recital, such as the mysterious and everlasting grief of the captain, and the impassioned love and wondrous self-denial of the hero Bug, is certainly tainted with exaggeration, bearing internal evidence of the author's mind being still under the influence of those illusions which are too soon destined to be chilled by the stern realities of life.

In 1827, Victor Hugo published his first drama, *Cromwell*, which he himself considered as the herald of a new dramatic school, and in the same year the poems called *Les Orientales*. The years 1828 and 1829 were devoted to the *Dernier Jour d'un Condamné*, and to the two dramas of *Hernani* and *Marion Delorme*, the first of which was not performed until 1830, nor the latter until 1831. *Last Day of a Condemned* is an eloquent, harrowing appeal to humanity, invoking respect to human life, even when sullied with blood; but a tone of asperity and haughty rebuke is occasionally assumed in this pamphlet, which somewhat mars its merciful intent. *Notre-Dame de Paris* made its appearance on the 15th of March 1831: during the subsequent

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years, the public witnessed successively the publication of the following collections of lyrics:—*Feuilles d'Automne*, 1832; *Chants du Crepuscule*, 1835; *Voix Intérieures*, 1837; and the *Rayons et Les Ombres*, June 1840; also the following dramas—*Lucrèce Borgia*, 1833; *Le Roi s'Amuse*, 1834; *Marie Tudor*, and *Angelo*, 1835; *Ruy Blas*, 1839.

In *Notre-Dame de Paris* several of the characters appear to have been suggested by previous writers, but there is no trace of servile imitation. The work, on the contrary, is of remarkable originality in all its parts. More especially in the descriptive portion there is a striking novelty, from the scene lying chiefly in a cathedral, where the main incidents pass. The novelist, consequently, is not at liberty to select his landscapes from the verdant face of nature, but is confined to a mass of stones; fields are exchanged for flinty pavements, and the smiling features of rural scenery for carved heads and sculptured griffins. *Notre-Dame de Paris* is the history of a foundling exposed under the roof of the cathedral of that name; the infant is a hideous monster, from whom the most charitable shrink in affright. He is ultimately adopted, however, by a character of extraordinary sanctity—Archdeacon Claude Frollo, one of the principal personages of the work. This ecclesiastic is most learned and devout; but having exhausted the limited science of his age, he has plunged, like many other mediæval dreamers, into a bewildering search after the philosophers' stone. Still, the absorbing studies in which he is engaged, and all the mortifications of the flesh in his cloistered solitude, fail to extinguish the carnal passions of the man. He chances to perceive a gypsy girl dancing in the streets, amidst an admiring throng of gazers; and from that moment his senses rise in rebellion—he becomes deeply enamored of the vagrant. Not without reason, however, on the score of taste, for Esmeralda, as the young Egyptian is called, is a perfect model of female loveliness, upon whom her own outcast tribe and the rough populace look as a being of preternatural charms and endowments.

Esmeralda bears some resemblance to Sir Walter Scott's Fenella, and Claude Frollo to the Father Ambrosio of Lewis, as well as to Goethe's Faust; he seems a compound of both, for he has the voluptuous sensations of the first, and the learning of the other. Quasimodo is the name of the foundling adopted by the priest; he is represented as a complete monster of deformity; in fact, nature or the author has freely lavished on him every gift of ugliness, without one redeeming grace, unless great bodily

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strength be so accounted. His visage is frightfully indented with traces of the small-pox; one eye is blind, and over the other protrudes an enormous wen; his mouth is grievously twisted, and from his thick lips projects a huge tusk; his legs describe a curve, being withal of uneven length; on his back grows a large hump, balanced by one of equal dimensions on his chest; on his head red bristles usurp the place of hair, and his ears are sealed to the admission of sound. Brought up in the cathedral, and appointed to the office of bell-ringer, Quasimodo's sole delight consists in exercising his functions: the affection he feels for his benefactor, Dom Claude, scarcely equals that he entertains for the instruments of his pleasure, the bells of Notre-Dame; he caresses and fondles them with tenderness, apostrophizes them in endearing terms, and gazes on them with delirious rapture, when he sets them in motion, and stuns Paris with a peal which is faint music to his own dulled organs. An unhappy being like him was not formed to win the world's admiration; on the contrary, he was regarded rather as a fiend, and might have fallen a victim to the superstition of the age as an evil spirit, if he had not enjoyed the patronage of so eminent a dignitary of the church as Claude Frollo: for the rest, the abhorrence of the world Quasimodo returned with a full measure of hatred.

The passion of the priest for Esmeralda, his jealousy, and his efforts to circumvent her and to propitiate her love, form the main plot of the piece, to which the rest of the action is subservient. At one time he betrays the object of his adoration into the hands of justice; at another he risks his life, and what is more, his reputation for sanctity, in an endeavor to save her. But a most extraordinary and unexpected rival springs up; it is no other than his own slave, the bell-ringer Quasimodo. A cup of water given him by the gipsy, when almost flogged to death on the public pillory, touches the heart of the poor savage; for this act of kindness, the only one he was ever conscious of receiving, he feels an ardent gratitude, and he is, moreover subdued by the charms of the compassionate Egyptian into her devoted admirer. For her he performs incredible feats of heroism; but she is alike indifferent to the burning passion of the archdeacon and to the faithful services of the muscular hunchback. The affections of Esmeralda are fixed upon a vain young officer of gendarmerie; fascinated by a brilliant uniform and a handsome face, she has conceived a violent love for their fortunate possessor, one Captain Phœbus de Chateaupers. For this unworthy object of her admiration, she retains, through the sever-

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est trials, a fond, confiding, steadfast attachment. Through the machinery of what was called "justice" in those days, she is hanged for the murder of this same Captain Phœbus, who chanced, so truly blind is justice, to be married about the time of her execution. For this disastrous fate she is indebted to the reverend archdeacon, who had taken occasion, at a critical moment, to plant a dagger in his rival's side, of which villanous deed the unfortunate Esmeralda is accused; and, after incarceration, trial, torture, exposure in a state of nudity on the steps of Notre-Dame, rescue by Quasimodo, escape through the agency of Claude Frollo, recognition by her long-lost mother, and recapture by the officers of the law, for this crime, and that of sorcery combined, she is eventually gibbeted. This catastrophe it was always in the power of the archdeacon to avert; and the persecution of the innocent girl was principally at his instigation, he hoping, by working on her fears, to wring her consent to his proposals. But throughout, even at the foot of the scaffold, she rejects his advances, his impassioned supplications, with scorn and loathing. Thus baffled in his expectations by the firmness and constancy of the lovely outcast, he ascends the tower of Notre-Dame to feast his eyes with the spectacle of her death; but, as he leans over the parapet gazing on the fatal Place de Grève, Quasimodo, aware of his participation in the atrocity then being perpetrated, hurls him from the giddy height. The descent of the wretched priest is arrested by a projecting cornice; for a moment he remains suspended, clinging desperately to this forlorn resource, but gradually relaxing his hold, the eye of Quasimodo intently fixed on him from above, he falls, alights on a sloping roof beneath, and rebounds on the pavement, a mangled and dislocated corpse.

It will be inferred from this sketch, that the novel of *Notre-Dame de Paris* is of a somewhat extraordinary character. We may add, too, that it is characterized by great inequalities of execution. Many of the scenes and incidents are related with admirable force and effect, while others are tediously spun out, and bear little or no relation to the plot, strictly so called. Still, as pictures of manners in the fifteenth century, they are interesting and valuable; and in those where Louis XI. himself is introduced, that cruel and wily despot is portrayed to the life. There is one part of the work which, as we have previously intimated, has contributed to render it popular in France, and especially in Paris, but which can have no peculiar charms for foreign readers: we refer to the minute descriptions of ancient Paris, and of the more

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prominent buildings within its enclosure. These descriptions are most complete, but are overloaded, perhaps, with too many artificial criticisms, which in a novel are certainly inappropriate. Yet, with all its faults, with all its extravagances of style and sentiment, and they are not few, *Notre-Dame* is a work of undoubted genius and originality, and will long remain a monument to the fame of Victor Hugo.

M. Alfred de Vigny is also a poet, a novelist, and a dramatist. He is distinguished for a quality very rare in these times: he bestows great care and attention on his compositions, and earnestly endeavors, before finally committing them to the press, to give them all the polish and perfection they are capable of receiving. The first of his works that attained great popularity was *Cinq-Mars*, or a Conspiracy under Richelieu. This historical romance appeared previous to the Revolution of 1830, at the time when the influence of Sir Walter Scott was at its zenith. It is one of the few works that have survived the reputation of the moment, and that will long continue to hold a place in public estimation. The date of the romance is fixed at a period of French history, when, under the tyrannical sway of Richelieu, all traces of the feudal monarchy were obliterated, and the way prepared for the despotic and courtly monarchy of Louis XIV. Whilst retaining his royal master in submissive tutelage, the great and crafty minister had succeeded in breaking the strength of those magnates who were formerly powerful enough to cope with their sovereign, and who had thereby operated, by means certainly of an odious and reprehensible nature, a salutary transformation in society, which was necessary as a preparation for the era of modern liberty.

Towards the close of Richelieu's career, when the most difficult part of his task was accomplished, when his declining health and growing jealousy of the imbecile prince on the throne made all the cares of his station press heavier upon him, and urged him to observe a more constant and anxious vigilance than ever, he used to amuse the feeble monarch with a succession of favorites, who served his purpose till Louis grew tired of them. Upon the royal satiety being made manifest, or when any of them threatened to acquire a dangerous extent of influence, and betokened an inclination to promote other designs than those which he contemplated, they were removed and replaced by others. The last of these favorites was the Marquis de Cinq-Mars, who is the hero of M. Alfred de Vigny's tale. He entered into a conspiracy against Richelieu, which conducted him to the block.

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Out of this conspiracy the author weaves a narrative fitted to arouse, in no ordinary degree, the interest and sympathies of readers; full of stirring incidents, and replete with graphic pictures of men and manners, the fortunes of Cinq-Mars are still the absorbing object of attention. The romantic circumstances attending him, his noble but fruitless struggle with the master-spirit of the age, his efforts to burst through the toils that entangle him, and his heroic self-devotion, serve to throw a lustre around him, which assuredly loses none of its brilliancy in the hands of M. de Vigny.

Cinq-Mars is secretly married to the princess Marie de Gonzagues, the adopted daughter of the Queen of France, who knows of their mutual attachment, but is ignorant of their union. While intent on the great schemes he and his friends were revolving, the queen sends him a letter, imploring him to sacrifice his affection for the princess, and to restore her to a sense of duty, since her engagement to him was the only obstacle that withheld her from the throne of Poland, which was urged upon her acceptance; adding, that she had sounded the princess, and felt assured that she would accept the proffered crown with less reluctance than Cinq-Mars perhaps believed. When he receives this letter, he is on the point of discharging a pistol, which was the concerted signal for the outbreak of the insurrection—of that insurrection devised and planned by him with the secret view of increasing his power and importance, so that he might be worthier of her whom he had espoused. Cinq-Mars reads, and calmly replaces the weapon on the table: his first movement had been to turn it against himself, but he laid it down, and, seizing a pencil, wrote on the back of the letter—"Marie de Gonzagues, being my wife, can only be Queen of Poland after my death. I am dying.—CINQ-MARS." He then returns the letter to the messenger, and hurriedly dismisses him, afraid of a moment of reflection. He re-enters pale, his eyes haggard and fixed on the ground, in speechless agony; a convulsive tremor seizes him, and he falls prostrate on the earth. On his recovery, he abandons all idea of an insurrection, and voluntarily delivers himself a prisoner, accompanied by his faithful friend De Thou, who, although disapproving of the conspiracy, had entered into it from regard to him, and in order to watch over his safety, and who now joins him in surrendering himself, resolved to die with him. The safety of their confederates had been previously provided for.

The insurrection, however, could not have succeeded: Richelieu had taken measures to render any movement abortive. The

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king signs the death-warrant of Cinq-Mars and De Thou; nevertheless, when in prison near Lyons, a proposal is made to them for effecting their escape and for poisoning the cardinal: the offer is heroically rejected. They are led out for execution; but the conspirators and all their friends had come in disguise, to rescue the two prisoners by a *coup de main;* all is arranged; they have contrived to inform them of the intended rescue. Near every soldier stands a conspirator, a friend, prepared to cut him down at the expected signal. Cinq-Mars is assured of freedom, if, when passing to the scaffold, he gives the sign by putting his hat on his head. But he no longer desires to live; he passes, but instead of putting on the hat, he flings it from him, and his head falls.

This novel, although an admirable one, is too much crowded with characters: the author has apparently thought himself obliged to introduce all the celebrated personages of the age; consequently several are useless and superfluous, and drawn tamely and indistinctly. He even introduces Milton on his way from Italy, reading his *Paradise Lost* (not written till twenty years after) to a crowd of French poets. Some of his subordinate characters are also too revolting and inconsistent with historical truth: Friar Joseph, for example, is represented in much more odious and repulsive colors than are warranted by history. The pious and studious De Thou, thrown into storms for which he was never meant, is finely portrayed as a man of high principle and virtue; yet we find him sacrificing all that is most dear in life to a romantic friendship, which is but coldly represented; he is too simple, and his intensity of friendship is not sufficiently accounted for. On the other hand, the representations of feeling and passion are most natural and impressive. Richelieu and Louis XIII., also, are admirably portrayed; and the spirit of the age animates every part of the work. On the whole, therefore, we have little hesitation in affirming that *Cinq-Mars* is a very instructive and superior romance.

Stello was the following prose work of M. de Vigny. It is a beautiful piece of composition, but on a subject somewhat hackneyed. Its theme is the sufferings of poetical minds in the uncongenial atmosphere of material society; and Gilbert, Chatterton, and André Chenier, are adduced as striking examples in point. As this production of M. de Vigny's pen cannot, however, be strictly classed in the department of literature now under review, we are debarred from entering into a more detailed notice of its great merits.

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The last prose work of the author of *Cinq-Mars—Servitude et Grandeur Militaires*—is a yet more perfect and mature specimen of his style. It is a collection of stories illustrative of military life, and is the result of the author's own experience as a soldier; for, from the year 1815 to 1828, he served in the army, although the military profession, with its painful observance of discipline, was little adapted to a man of his tastes. He has forcibly depicted the irksomeness and tedium of a soldier's life in times of peace, and indicated the means by which his moral position might be raised and his hardships alleviated, with great benefit to the individual, and without injury to the service. The stories are full of melancholy beauty, and tend to convey a vivid and certainly novel conception of the sacrifices and virtues required from a soldier in times which, like ours, are not those of martial glory.

One of the most celebrated, popular, and copious of modern French novelists, is M. de Balzac, who commands the applause and admiration of a large portion of society, but is viewed with displeasure and disapprobation by the more stern and censorious. This arises in a great measure from the multiplicity and diversity of his contributions to the light literature of France. His earlier works, published under the fictitious name of Horace de St. Aubin, are mostly poor and worthless; others of his productions are vicious and immoral; but many are worthy of all commendation. Thus, as each inclines, instances may be quoted from M. de Balzac to justify severe animadversion or high eulogium. In style, although for the most part his diction is pure and beautiful, he is often guilty of overcharging his pictures, of being too labored in his descriptions, and of taking improper liberties with language.

M. de Balzac, however, is a profound and bold observer of human nature; his keen perception of the inmost emotions and sensibilities of the female heart, in particular, has justly excited remark, and startled many a fair reader. But throughout the whole range of observation, he displays an extraordinary power and delicacy of comprehension, which, combined with his inexhaustible sprightly imagination, render him one of the most entertaining and agreeable writers of the present day, and extort admiration even from those most reluctant to testify it. Amidst the great variety of M. de Balzac's works, we shall venture to particularize only such as may be deemed the best and choicest. Foremost in the list stands undoubtedly *Eugénie Grandet*, an incomparable portraiture of a miser, before which even the justly

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celebrated *Avare* of Molière sinks into insignificance. The *Médecin de Campagne* is an affecting tale of high Christian morality, heroic self-denial, and humble greatness of mind, from the perusal of which none can rise without feeling invigorated in virtue and contentment. Next to these, the *Histoire de Louis Lambert* is one of his more remarkable productions. The *Lys dans la Vallée* is not without blemishes, but seems to breathe the exquisite tenderness rather of a female than a masculine heart. In his *Scènes de la Vie Privée*, the principal and more finished sketches of private life are, *La Femme Abandonnée*, *La Femme de Trente Ans*, *La Grenadière*, *Les Célibataires*, and *Les Illusions Perdues*. The *Père Goriot* may be a very faithful picture, but it does not describe agreeable objects; it is, moreover, too much a parody on Shakspeare's *Lear*. The *Histoire de César Birotteau* is a tale of the deepest interest, though compounded of commonplace materials. César is the representative of a large class in the community—a simple, unimaginative, half-instructed *bourgeois*, who strives by honest means to increase his store of worldly goods; yet the probity and worth of this ordinary character are so attractively displayed, that, in the hands of M. de Balzac, he becomes a very interesting hero; whilst the portrait of his wife presents a perfect model of matrimonial virtue. One of M. de Balzac's last works, *La Femme Supérieure*, is principally a description of the abuses and routine of ministerial functions; another, *Le Grand Homme de Province à Paris*, depicts the struggles and illusions of a poor poetic youth, who comes from the country in search of bread and glory. In fine, M. de Balzac has no system; his intellect is a heterogeneous mine, containing ore of every description, from the commonest to the most precious; his mind is a mirror that reflects the whole of society, from the mysterious reveries of his metaphysical novel, *Seraphita*, the subject of which is the history of mysticism, to the gross sensualism of Rabelais, whom he has imitated in his *Contes Drolatiques*. The works of M. de Balzac form, upon the whole, as singular and diversified a collection as may be found in the literature of any country.

We now come to the works of the celebrated George Sand (Madame Dudevant), which afford a lamentable proof of the aberrations into which a highly gifted mind may be led, that is not fortified by the equanimity and resignation derived from religious influences. The heart of Madame Dudevant must have, doubtless, been wrung by tortures of no ordinary character. Unfortunate in her marriage, and stung by the treatment of a

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heartless, corrupt, and hypocritical society, she long devoured her chagrin; at last, the rancorous feeling engendered became too powerful for control, the pent-up passions broke from bondage, and the rebellion was signalized by an outpouring of wrath that appalled the world. It took the form of direful licentiousness. Conscious of her intellectual powers, and goaded to exasperation by a sense of wrong, it would seem that Madame Dudevant sought to retaliate upon society by depicting it, in one of its holiest pactions, in the most revolting colors. To this cause must be ascribed those pictures of conjugal life, those denunciations against salutary barriers, those fretful and piercing lamentations of a troubled and vengeful spirit, which, clothed in all the graces of the most fascinating style, and impressed with the intensity of actual anguish, have harrowed the public feeling of France, and scandalized its literature. Yet admiration of the extraordinary talent displayed by the author, pity for her sufferings, and sympathy with many of the sentiments and emotions she evinces, have secured her a host of enthusiastic partisans, who almost stifle with their applause the voice of censure and reprobation. Thus the assumed name under which she writes, George Sand, has attained a reputation, which, for the sake of morality, is to be deplored, especially when we regard her earlier works; although, as we shall hereafter show, she is now atoning in some degree for her misdeeds, by productions of an estimable and unexceptionable character. And allow us to remark, that the popularity she enjoys is not to be attributed, as inveterate detractors of the French nation have alleged, to the vitiated taste, the corrupt manners, and irreligious tendencies of modern France, but really to the ineffable charms of her composition, to the inimitable beauties that so abound in her luxuriant pages as to render it difficult for the most austere to resist their magical and enchanting influence.

The works that first appeared under the name of George Sand, were respectively entitled *Indiana*, *Valentine*, and *Lelia*. The latter claims pre-eminence in depravity of tone and character. The two former are, to a certain extent, less reprehensible. They are highly-wrought pictures of the wretchedness of married life, which, although unhappily common in France, from the number of inconsiderate and ill-assorted unions, known as *mariages de convenance*, is a theme of so dangerous a nature, that, unless handled with great delicacy and purity, it is unfitted for public exposition. The two heroines of these tales, Indiana and Valentine, are represented as women of warm affections, of sen-

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sitive and imaginative temperaments, who, chained to husbands of gross and uncongenial habits, pine and languish under their misery, and escape a premature grave only by plunging into guilt. In a subsequent novel, *Jacques*, the case is reversed, and the man is the victim—a husband of refined taste and cultivated intellect is afflicted with a wife whose mind is a vacuum: the result is despair and death. Upon the appearance of *Jacques*, the author was formally accused of attacking the sanctity of the matrimonial tie, and of disseminating false and criminal ideas on the nature of conjugal duties. Dudevant repelled this charge in a letter addressed to M. Nisard, wherein she asserted her profound respect for matrimony, such as it is preached by Jesus and St. Paul, but avowed her abhorrence of it under its present characteristics, destitute as it is of all holy and rational sanctions.

And now it becomes our duty to state that two very distinct periods mark the literary life of George Sand. The first embraces the works we have just enumerated, when the mind of the author seems to have been under an almost delirious influence; the second is a period of reaction, when more becoming sentiments have arisen in her lacerated heart, and chaster and more benign feelings have prompted her pen. From the dawn of this happier era, her works have borne a new and purer character, untainted with immorality, and possessing unalloyed all those matchless graces that so decked and embellished even the most flagitious of her earlier productions. We do not find, however, that this signal change has been duly observed and appreciated by the watchful critics of the periodical press, or acknowledged by those who had discharged upon the eminent writer the largest measure of indignant execration. It is not the less undoubted, at the same time, and may be first detected in the publication entitled *Lettres d'un Voyageur*. In these delightful letters she describes, with pathos and animation, the reminiscences of her youth, the course of her affections, the blight and desolation of her soul under accumulated sorrows; but she no longer speaks in a wrathful and passionate tone; her spirit is subdued and chastened; and she pours forth the natural and plaintive effusions of one wounded in the tenderest sensibilities, stricken as a mother, a friend, a lover, and a wife. The countries she has visited in her travels are also sketched with great force and vigor of delineation, which leaves a vivid impression on the mind of the reader. Upon the whole, these letters can scarcely fail to suggest a comparison, as to style and manner, with Rousseau's *Confessions*, although free from the gross irreg-

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ularities that so seriously detract from the merit of the latter celebrated work. In this publication, we are likewise rejoiced to add, Madame Dudevant takes occasion to express regret at having written *Lelia*, and to ridicule the exaggerations of character and passion into which she was therein betrayed.

We have little hesitation in affirming, therefore, that the later works of this author may be read with safety and pleasure, and may defy objection on the part of those scrupulous moralists, who are so ready to anathematize deviations from the strict letter of their code. The first of them that occurs to us is *Simon*, which would have attracted greater notice and admiration had it stood alone, and not been eclipsed by more brilliant productions from the same pen. *André* is an interesting tale, founded on the love of a country gentleman's son for an orphan milliner-girl; the lovers are amiable and virtuous, but the youth is timid and vacillating, and cannot find courage either to offend his father by forming an unequal match, or to sacrifice his own feelings by breaking it off. The catastrophe, however, we are disposed to censure as unnecessarily gloomy and tragical, when there seemed every probability of the whole being wound up to general satisfaction. *Mauprat* is a masterpiece of descriptive writing; it frequently reminds us of *Rob Roy*, and is scarcely inferior to that celebrated novel in many of its descriptions. *Les Maitres Mosaïstes* abounds in charming details, and must be the offspring of some Venetian reminiscence. *La Dernière Aldini* does not possess the same degree of perfection as the others. *Spiridion* is a mystical novel, very much admired by a certain class of readers.

In conclusion, we fear that George Sand (for under this cognomen Madame Dudevant is universally spoken of) is aiming at too great a fecundity; she is exhausting her powers on subjects little worthy, after all, of her genius. Now that her mind has undergone a beneficial reaction, we may hope it will extend yet further, and lead her to more elevated topics; that she will understand the awful responsibilities of those transcendently endowed, and direct the talents so liberally bestowed on her to the enhancement and exaltation of the moral grandeur of man.

The maritime novel scarcely seems adapted to the genius of French writers; yet it was by this kind of composition that M. Eugène Sue, one of the novelists of the day, began his career. It is singular that the maritime novel should not be of English origin, when the sea itself had been for centuries the peculiar element of Great Britain, and the naval profession closely inter-

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woven with its political greatness. The lead taken by an American in cultivating this branch of novel-writing, must needs have proved somewhat mortifying to a nation so justly proud of its naval trophies as the British; and we can easily imagine the unpleasant astonishment with which it would regard the appearance of the *Spy*, the *Pilot*, and the *Last of the Mohicans*, by Mr. Fenimore Cooper. It has been argued, however, that this sort of novel really is of English origin, and Smollett has been adduced as its veritable originator; but this cannot be admitted, for Smollett only incidentally touches upon seafaring life, and is more intent upon describing the peculiarities of individuals than the characteristics of sailors as a class.

It is not improbable, at the same time, that the *Corsair* of Lord Byron may have suggested the idea of the first maritime novel; but there can be no doubt that Mr. Cooper, who entered the American navy at an early period of his life, is justly entitled to be considered its creator. He has since found many successful competitors in the line among British sailors—Captain Marryat, Captain Chamier, and others; but this description of writing which, from its novelty, was at first very popular, seems to be much on the wane at the present moment even in nautical England.

M. Eugène Sue's naval romances possess certain merits which have ensured them a favorable reception from the public. They evince great fertility of fancy and power of description, mingled with that love of fun and frolic which so peculiarly distinguishes the sailor; and these qualities have sufficed to render them in a certain degree popular, though sullied with many grievous defects. The author was well fitted by experience, we should suppose, to portray nautical life, having seen some service as a surgeon in the navy, although we have heard Mr. Cooper sneer at him as a fresh-water sailor. But be this as it may, as a writer he has fallen into several of the worst faults that characterize the modern novelists. Most of his scenes and characters are overwrought and exaggerated, the truthful and natural are disregarded for the mystical and extravagant, and the nature of his reflections is crude, sententious, and distorted.

But the principal objection we have to urge against M. Eugène Sue is, that he has undertaken to uphold the fatal paradox, that virtue is always unfortunate on this earth, and crime always triumphant. Thus, the villains who are the heroes of his novels are ever prosperous during their lives and honored in their deaths. Thus, also, he seeks to depreciate the usual objects of

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human interest, reverence and ambition, and to humiliate our nature by degrading those whom he himself represents as most worthy to command esteem by sympathy. His chief productions are—*Atar Gull*, a frightful story of Negro vengeance; *Salamandre*, which abounds in monstrous scenes, depicted with extraordinary force and power, but so revolting that we turn from them, and ask in amazement whether such scenes are possible in the navy of civilized France; the *Vigie de Koatven*, a bold sensual composition, wherein the vilest horrors are clothed in glowing and attractive colors.

In the preface to this last-named novel, the author specifies the scope and object of the principal series of his works, and propounds sundry preposterous ideas of a prophetic nature, which he nevertheless maintains with equal pertinacity and ingenuity. M. Eugène Sue is one of those who profess to regard the exploded state of things in France as the nearest approach to perfection yet known in social organization; he looks back with regret to the times of Louis XIV. and XV., when the kingdom and its destinies were swayed by courtiers, courtezans, and confessors—when aristocratic privileges and priestly intolerance were in full bloom—when the "people," properly so called, were unknown to have any but a physical existence—to be other than "hewers of wood and drawers of water." In a return to pure Catholicity and aristocratic institutions, M. Sue alone sees any prospect of happiness or prosperity. He considers the Reformation to have extinguished the light of heaven. Hear his words:—"Since *philosophism*," he says, "the hideous and inevitable consequence of Lutheranism, arose, preaching incredulity, to stretch its funereal pall between heaven and earth, and deprive mankind of the divine brilliancy, men, thinking that the heavens were empty because they were veiled from them, have crawled in wretchedness under this false and lugubrious light." If M. Sue had chanced to have been born and nurtured in some very exclusive circle, where such besotted opinions are still taught and religiously cherished, we might have pitied him as the victim of early installed prejudices; but as he cannot boast, we believe, any lineage higher than that of a mere surgeon, we are inclined either to doubt his sincerity, or to contemn him as a miserable panderer to degrading influences. Nor do we find anything in his novels to raise our estimation either of him or of his views; for his heroes, who are meant to embody the spirit of the times and dogmas so emphatically eulogized by him, are loathsome creations; particularly, in the *Vigie de Koatven*, the

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principal character is a horrible ruffian, guilty of execrable abominations, whose career is nevertheless crowned with prosperity, and whose death is unattended by shame or remorse.

We have heard sailors speak of the nautical novels of M. Corbière as containing by far the most faithful representations of sea-faring life in the French Language. This author has had the advantage of thirty years' experience at sea; and he is distinguished by a sensible style of writing, with some pretensions to pathos. It has been our good fortune to peruse only one of his productions, that entitled *Le Negrier;* and though it is on the harrowing subject of the slave-trade, it impressed us with a high opinion of his capabilities as a novel-writer. M. Jules Lecomte is another clever maritime novelist; his *Ile de la Tortue* is a highly interesting tale. As to M. Eugène Sue, it is proper to state that he has of late years forsaken the ocean, after leaving as a legacy an esteemed and picturesque history of the French navy. He has since dedicated his labors to pictures of society on terra-firma, and successively published the *Marquis de Letorière*, *Latreaumont*, *Arthur*, *Jean Cavalier*, and other works.

M. Frederic Soulié is deservedly a great favorite with the French public; his literary powers are of the highest order. His style is not so elegant or versatile as that of M. de Balzac; but, on the other hand, it is free from the defects of that writer; it is clear, forcible, and flowing in a natural and unstudied vein. His first historical romance, *Les Deux Cadavres*, is a powerful and highly finished composition, although too detailed in some of its parts; the moral is singularly instructive, for it inculcates a just horror of the evils and obliquities that result from the rancor of party-spirit. *Le Vicomte de Béziers* is a very superior production; it is founded on the ferocious crusade instituted against that heroic noble in the beginning of the thirteenth century, and vividly portrays the desolating effects of fanaticism and ignorance. The *Vicomte de Toulouse* is in some sort a continuation of the former, but not equal to it in dramatic interest. After these admirable romances, M. Soulié published several amusing tales, but of no great importance, nor characterized by any special talent or object. One, however, merits particular notice, *Le Conseiller d'Etat*, as a novel of great excellence. The heroine, Camilla, is a bright example of female purity, into whose heart no evil thought has ever penetrated; her pride of virtue, her delicacy of mind and manners, her constancy of affection, threw an ineffable charm around her, and conduct her unpol-

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luted through the maze of vice to which an unhappy fate and a corrupt world have conspired to expose her.

We have yet to speak of another remarkable work of M. Soulié, which extends to eight octavo volumes, published at different periods, and terminated only last year; it bears the startling title of *Les Mémoires du Diable*, being, in truth, a reflection of all that is infernal and diabolical in society, such as it now exists, at least in the author's eyes. It is a production evidently suggested by Lesage's *Devil on two Sticks*: for it proceeds on the same idea, more fully worked out and developed, presenting an accumulation of such hideous pictures of human degradation, as are at present too greatly in vogue among a certain class of writers. It is written with infinite dramatic talent, and exhibits a rare faculty of carrying on in the narration a variety of inextricable intrigues. But it may well be doubted whether this work has had its origin in a genuine abhorrence of the vices it unfolds, and in a sincere desire to improve and ameliorate society. In spite of the protestations of the author to this effect in his preface, we are rather disposed to condemn it as the labored artifice of a writer on the rack for topics to gratify prurient tastes and sensual appetites. Be this as it may, however, it is a mirror, placed before the face of society, which reflects such disgusting forms and features, that she may fairly wish to dash it to the ground. Nowhere has that degrading passion for gold, which infects all around us, been depicted in more forcible colors, or appeared more odious and execrable. In reading these Memoirs of the Devil, we might be led to believe that there exists not in the whole creation either man or woman who can resist the temptation of gold: not only the base and vulgar, but the haughty and intellectual, bow their heads in presence of this ignoble idol. Religion, virtue, everything, yield to the vile metal; man is callous to everything, but to the exertion necessary for securing its possession and enjoyment. However true this may be with regard to a great part of mankind, let us proclaim its falsehood with respect to the majority; the human heart is not so universally corrupt; it is but the studied exaggeration of a novelist. If M. Soulié had relieved the unbroken series of revolting portraitures by interspersing some of those lofty and terrible lessons supplied by the votaries of depravity and corruption, his work might have possessed some claims to praise; but as it is—a development, in eight octavo volumes, of all the vicious propensities of man—whatever may be its literary merits, it must be denounced and shunned as calculated to impair that cheering and

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salutary conviction of the increasing growth of virtue, religion, and morality amongst mankind, which enlightened Christians and philanthropists are laboring to instil and disseminate.

The romance and novel writers whom we have enumerated (with the addition of Paul de Kock, hereafter to be noticed), may be described as the more popular and pre-eminent in France at the present day—an assertion it would be dangerous to hazard in the Parisian press, for it would assuredly kindle the boiling wrath of multitudinous scribes who are conscientiously convinced of their own surpassing genius. There are many others whose works have attained considerable celebrity, and whose reputation stands deservedly high. M. de Salvandy, in his single composition of the kind, *Alonzo*, has given a vivid description of Spain, and of the adventurous warfare of the French armies in the Peninsula under Napoleon. M. Jules Janin, the well-known histrionic critic of the *Journal des Débats*, is the author of *Barnave*, an episode of the French Revolution, exaggerated, unfortunately, but containing several striking passages; and of the *Chemin de Traverse*, an interesting illustration of the success usually attendant upon perseverance. Michel Masson and Raymond Brucker have written in conjunction two clever but immoral novels, the *Maçon*, and *Les Intimes*, under the name of Michel Raymond; they have since composed separate pieces, and seem, especially the latter, to have lost their graphic power. M. Masson, however, has enriched the department of light literature by his remarkable *Essais sur les Mœurs du Peuple*, the value of which would have been greatly enhanced by the presence of a more philosophical spirit. His *Couronne d'Epines* is a cloud of fiction thrown over the life of the unfortunate Savage, Dr. Johnson's favorite in the *Lives of the Poets*.

The name of M. Saintine as a novelist is partially known, we believe, in the British Isles. His *Mutilé* is a fearful tale, borrowed from the annals of papal tyranny, written in a very elegant style, but not sufficiently forcible for the subject. *Picciola* is justly regarded as a most graceful composition. The subsequent work of the same author, *Les Soirées de Jonathain*, belied the expectations that were entertained from the precedent of *Picciola*. M. Alfred de Musset, author of the *Confessions d'un Enfant du Peuple*, is a light, clever writer, and a very original poet; some finely expressed passages might be selected from the work we have named, and it is commended by a laudable abhorrence of materialism; but in his delineation of female delicacy and purity, the author is altogether eclipsed by M. de Balzac, who, in his *Lys dans la*

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Vallée, has confessedly given a ravishing picture of female loveliness, virtue, and resignation.

M. Alphonse Karr may be likewise ranked amongst this order of novelists. He is often sparkling and sprightly in his eccentric compositions, and is very felicitous in hitting off a portrait; he has too much the air of imitating Sterne, without at all approaching the originality of that extraordinary writer. The literary merits of M. Alphonse Karr are nevertheless far from despicable: his *Sous les Tilleuls*, *Fa Dièze*, and so forth, are agreeable and amusing productions. Alexandre Dumas, the well-known dramatist, has also written several tales and light pieces, remarkable for the wit and humor they display. His *Capitaine Paul*, however, is distinguished by qualities of a sterner character, being in truth a very terrible drama. His *Impressions de Voyages*, wherein he recounts his adventures in Switzerland, Italy, and Egypt, have afforded universal amusement and delight. His last novel, *La Comtesse de Salisbury*, is clever, like all he writes, but bears evident traces of hasty composition; indeed, this is the besetting sin not only of Alexandre Dumas, but of multitudes of purveyors to the ravenous appetite of the public for novelty; and nothing can more surely tend to impair the merits and jeopardize the fame of writers. Such men seem to justify the gloomy cynicism of M. Soulié; they are ready to barter all for immediate gain.

A comparatively recent novelist, M. Charles de Bernard, entered the literary field, under promising auspices, with the *Nœud Gordien*, a series of very interesting tales, and *Gerfaut*, one of the good novels of its year; but his subsequent works have disappointed the expectations of his friends. M. Léon Gozlan, author of the archæological historical romance entitled *Les Tourelles ou Les Châteaux de France*, and the *Notaire de Chantilly*, is a peculiarly agreeable and graceful writer. He, at all events, cannot be reproached with being too prolific or hasty in his compositions, for he places an interval of years between each work; and yet has deceived his admirers by his late publication, *Une Nuit Blanche*, which is merely a collection of various pretty tales, that had previously appeared in the reviews and newspapers, and consequently is a stale offering under a new and fictitious title. We have elsewhere alluded to this deceptive practice, so much in vogue and so unworthy of literary integrity. Among the most notorious of such deceptions, we may notice the *Homme de Lettres* of M. Frederic Soulié, the *Catacombes* of Jules Janin, and *Tonadillas* by M. Scribe, the celebrated *vaudévilliste*.

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While on the subject of historical novels, we might, but for other reasons, have spoken of the Bibliophile Jacob (M. Paul Lacroix), who has written a series of romances under the collective title of *Romans pour servir à l'Histoire de France*, illustrative of manners and customs in France during the middle ages. These pieces evince great antiquarian research; but it is to be regretted that the taste of the author has led him to depict the most repulsive features of society in those bygone times, and to overcharge them with all the horrors that fiction could invent. We are bound nevertheless to admit, that they are drawn with much effective power, and in some instances with undoubted truth. But whilst allowing their full measure of merit to these otherwise hideous relations, we cannot refrain from expressing surprise that the amount of labor they must have required from the author, in hist oricalstudies, was not dedicated by him to the erection of some monument more worthy of his industry and erudition. It is true, he has made one effort to enrich the domain of history, by a record of the reign of Louis XII.; but it is rather a sketch of the individual and of those about him, and is written with great carelessness, although accompanied by sundry valuable documents. We incline to the belief that his romances have not repaid him for the time and labor bestowed on them; if they have, in a pecuniary point of view, which we much doubt, they certainly will not in fame; and yet the Bibliophile Jacob is a man of great learning and of high capabilities, fitting him to succeed in literary endeavors.

M. Sainte-Beuve, the able critic whom we briefly noticed in our remarks on the state of criticism in France, is the author of a work of fiction, which belongs more to the province of moral philosophy than to that of imaginative narrative. Its title, *Volupté*, is calculated to suggest erroneous ideas as to the object of the book, which is of a purely psychological character, and in direct contrast with the favorite philosophy of fiction in these days. The hero is a man who, exhausted by sensual excesses, feels the emptiness of all earthly enjoyments, and turns from them with disgust, to seek relief and regeneration in prayer and religious meditation. The struggles and hesitations of his mind are detailed with extreme delicacy of perception. The placid calmness diffused over his soul by pious exercises and constant mortifications, the innocence and purity to which he seems restored—in short, all the beneficial fruits of a religious retreat from the world —are portrayed with impressive effect and earnestness. The

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only reproach to which this work is amenable, is a casual obscurity and an unfortunate partiality for far-fetched images.

The name of De Stendhal is familiar to the French public, as a novelist, a tourist, and a biographer. The variety of productions issued from the press under this appellation, gives a high idea of the industry and fertility of the author who has assumed it. He is no other than M. Bayle, the French Consul at Civita-Vecchia. His first work of fiction, *Rouge et Noir*, is distinguished for depth of observation and energy of style; it exhibits in the blackest colors the vices and selfishness that prevail among the higher classes of society. It evinces a perfect knowledge of life, but leaves on the mind of the reader a sickening sensation at the heartlessness, depravity, and villany of the world, as therein depicted. Its moral seems to be, that elegance and refinement are but a mask for knavery and deception. Thus, it is one of those works we feel disposed to reprobate, for it conveys false and dangerous impressions, which would serve to banish all confidence from amongst men, and stifle every generous emotion of the heart. After *Rouge et Noir*, the author published a volume containing biographies of Haydn, Mozart, and Metastasio; subsequently, a highly intructive and insteresting work, entitled *Promenade dans Rome;* a life of Rossini; *Histoire de la Peinture en Italie;* a reminiscence of his travels, in *Rome, Naples, et Florence;* and the *Mémoires d'un Touriste;* after which he returned to his vocation of novelist, and his last works of fiction are *La Chartreuse de Parme* and *L'Abbesse de Castro.* A reflective and philosophic vein pervades these compositions of M. Bayle, but rather of the *Candide* cast.

M. Emile Souvestre is likewise a novelist with a philosophic bias, but of a tendency widely different from that of M. de Stendhal. The latter tasks his faculties to ridicule and destroy what are called the illusions of life—his estimate of things is pre-eminently sneering and sarcastic; M. Emile Souvestre, on the contrary, is full of charity for human frailties and sufferings—his heart beats quick with pity, love, and sympathy. His first work, *Les Derniers Bretons*, contains a vivid description of Brittany, that romantic province, with its wild, rocky scenery and sea-girt shores, peopled by so primitive, simple, and imaginative a race. Brittany gave birth to M. Emile Souvestre, and also to Lesage, Ginguené, Chateaubriand, Lamennais, Michelet, and Broussais, all men of an energetic order of genius. The works that followed *Les Derniers Bretons*, are the *Echelle des Femmes*, *Riche et Pauvre*, and the *Mémoires d'un Sans-culotte.* The

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scene of the last is laid in La Vendée; and it exposes the savage ferocity and cruelty of the royalists during the memorable struggle in the time of the republic; opprobrium has been so freely lavished on the revolutionists for their conduct in that war, that it is but fair to know much of it was simply in retaliation. The high moral and religious feeling, the elevation of style and sentiment, that mark the productions of M. Souvestre, have secured him the esteem and applause of all who can appreciate sterling merit. In common with other sincere philanthropists, the conditions and prospects of the lower classes have attracted his regard, and drawn from him much eloquent commiseration and many sagacious observations. He has not enrolled himself in that school of writers which delights to paint human life in its worst and most odious features. As he himself has said, in his *Riche et Pauvre* (as noble and affecting a tale of virtuous love, disinterestedness, and generosity, as was ever composed), if the condition of men be one of such unmixed vice and corruption, this earthly existence must indeed be "a cruel jest of the Creator." But it is his pride to exhibit humanity in its more cheering phases, and to cherish the belief that if, under the inscrutable dispensation of Providence, wickedness abounds on the face of the earth, the domain of goodness is more extended, and progressively expanding.

Among the desultory writers of modern France, we know of none who has displayed a more remarkable precocity and versatility of talent that M. Charles Nodier. So early as 1777, when residing in Switzerland, he wrote and published *Les Aventures du Jeune d'Olban*, a fiction in the style of *Werther*. We find, under date of 1786, a collection of tales by M. Nodier, entitled *Choix de Petits Romans Imités de l'Allemand*. In the preface to this publication he gives way to a fit of delirious vanity, and threatens the world, that if it continued ignorantly and ungratefully to disregard his merits, he will assuredly punish it by committing suicide. Announcements of a similar nature have often been made since, poetic aspirants deeming, from the deplorable example of Chatterton, that the menace would frighten the world, and induce it hastily to worship a genius unable to brook any delay. With M. Nodier this silly egotism was but a youthful extravagance; no man through a long life has evinced a more undeviating modesty, or found more tranquil happiness in the love of study. The revolution soon afterwards put an end to all literary efforts and aspirations. When order was restored, M. Nodier reappeared as an author by the publication of the *Peintre*

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de Saltzbourg, a sort of sentimental diary; which he followed up with several works of the same nature, entitled, *Le Dernier Chapitre de mon Roman*, *Essais d'un Jeune Barde*, *Les Proscrits*, and *Les Tristes*.

During that period of M. Nodier's literary life which belongs exclusively to the nineteenth century, he has published several novels, much admired for their purity and flexibility of style and gracefulness of composition. None can describe with more perfect delicacy of appreciation or more engaging simplicity the thousand emotions of the human heart or the external beauties of nature, and the infinite shades they cast on pensive souls. His novel of *Jean Sbogar*, published in 1818, has been his most popular work, although written in a more rapid and unequal style than usually distinguishes his productions, which is probably owing to the nature of the subject. The hero of the tale is one of those accomplished brigands of whom we have heard a great deal of late years, who pilfer on highways and shine in ball-rooms, robbing travellers of their movables and high-born damsels of their hearts, with equal ease and elegance. *Paul Clifford*, *Leone Leoni*, and *Massaroni*, are varieties of the species, which have thrown new illustrations on the character since M. Nodier's delineation saw the light. *Jean Sbogar* was followed by a succession of novels in the subsequent years, which form, as it were, a special era in the author's life, for his labors have since been more particularly devoted to philology. The titles of these works are—*Thérèse Aubert*, published in 1819; *Adèle*, in 1820; *Smarra*, in 1821; *Trilby*, in 1822. They constitute a delightful group of fiction, standing apart and without the circle of the romances and novels which bear away the palm in these days of glitter and fustian. M. Nodier has subsequently related some episodes in his own life, contained in a work called *Souvenirs*, which abounds in interesting details and adventures, and he has likewise contributed various charming sketches of a light nature to the periodical press.

Before dismissing M. Charles Nodier, we may be allowed to add, that his least merits are those of a novelist: master of many sciences and languages, he has enriched the department of philology with sundry luminous and recondite dissertations. Such are his *Questions de Littérature Légale*, his *Onomatopées*, his *Mélanges Tirés d'une Petite Bibliothèque*, and, above all, his *Elements du Linguistique*, a highly philosophic work of erudition, in which he develops a whole system for the formation of languages. France, however, may justly reproach M. Nodier for not having

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applied the great resources of his mind and learning to the achievement of some standard work of general utility, instead of wasting them on desultory subjects; the extraordinary number of prefaces and introductions, for instance, which he has written to poems, novels, and other works of every description, would almost stagger belief. We have heard, indeed, that for many years he has devoted a great portion of his time to a projected etymological dictionary, which would certainly be one of the most desirable acquisitions to the literature of the nineteenth century.

It is only too true, and much to be regretted, that estimable writers, who keep within the bounds of sense and decorum, and aim at combining instruction with amusement, rarely find their labors rewarded by that effervescent popularity which marks the advent of anything new in the "literature of despair." But if they are slowly appreciated, their merits, on the other hand, will be long admired; they gain what the other ephemeral productions lose by time. M. Prosper Merimée stands pre-eminent among such authors; everything that comes from his pen deserves to be diligently sought and studied. His diction is peculiarly attractive from its energy and glowing vivacity. Some of his tales are perfect gems; and to them he owes the notice of the public, rather than to the works that preceded them, which are nevertheless of a higher order of composition. His first work, *Le Théatre de Clara Gazul*, is a collection of fictitious Spanish plays, which have not been much read, although greatly admired by Goethe. *La Guzla* followed, obscurely published in 1827; it is a collection of feigned translations of Illyrian songs, skilfully conceived by the author, and which may often be advantageously compared with the Klephtic Songs of M. Fauriel, or Dr. Bowring's Hungarian and Servian Poems; they have been much more read in Germany than in either France or England. In 1828, M. Merim'e wrote his *Jacquerie*, in which he endeavored to throw light, with the aid of fiction, on a rather obscure portion of the history of France. The following year witnessed the publication of the *Chronique de Charles IX.*, the best regular work of the author. This book, full of dramatic interest, imitates the better style of chronicles; each of the chapters seems an isolated composition, and has no connection with the others; all together form a series of historical pictures, delightful in their details, but thus deprived of all *ensemble*. *Double Méprise* is an admirable work of fiction by this distinguished writer, the intent and object of which apparently is, to exhibit the disappointment and wretchedness conse-

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quent upon an attachment and union founded, not upon the impulses of the heart, but upon the dictates of the *head*. The characters are drawn in a very superior and effective manner, whilst the style is free, lively, and fluent, and the incidents of the piece are linked together and made conducive to the general development with exquisite art. Upon the whole, we may venture to pronounce it a perfect specimen of the novel. We have just cause for regret, that, owing we presume to the absorbing nature of his functions as inspector-general of the monuments of the kingdom, M. Merimée now so rarely favors the public with the labors of his pen. It has proved barren for several years, with the exception of occasional tales, generally published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

At the commencement of this chapter, we took occasion to intimate, that our purpose was to bring the French novelists under review, not according to the scale of their merit, but according to the rank they hold in popular favor, since the influence they exercise is thus more easily judged; and it is on this account that we have hitherto delayed to mention a work of fiction, which is, in our opinion, an extraordinary and original creation, though we fear somewhat above the comprehension of ordinary readers. *Ahasvérus*, or the Wandering Jew, by M. Edgar Quinet, is, we believe, scarcely known on this side of the Channel, although it has obtained a great number of admirers in Germany, for it has something of the Germanic wildness about it. *Ahasvérus* is an epic novel, full of the sublime, the mystical, and the supernatural. The author seems to have given his imagination the amplest license; it ranges at random through the wide creation; no earthly obstacle debars its progress; it overleaps all barriers, and soars through all space. At the beginning of this marvellous fiction, we behold the world emerge from chaos at the bidding of its Creator; then man rises as the intermediate link between matter and God, and they soon form one sole universal being. This strange and stupendous drama is replete with high poetic beauties, and studded with brilliant illustrative episodes, which are completely drowned in the pantheistic idea of the work; and the work itself is subservient to the paramount conception it represents and embodies. We shall not pretend, however, to analyze, even briefly, this piece of transcendental mysticism, for, like other works of that class, it cannot be judged by the usual laws of criticism; departing from this sublunary sphere, and floating in the infinite, it can be followed only by those who are content to lose themselves in unin-

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telligible reveries, and to shroud their faculties in the misty vapors of the intangible and incomprehensible. This must be the character of all such ambitious productions; and we are happy we can draw an example from English literature, which will at once justify and illustrate our remark. A work published some years ago, under the sounding title of *Salathiel, or the Past, the Present, and the Future*, is on the same subject of the Wandering Jew, and concludes amidst such a cloud of psychological jargon as might confuse the clearest head in Christendom.

Previous to the publication of this singular work of fiction, M. Edgar Quinet had acquired a well-deserved reputation amongst the learned by an able translation of Herder's *Philosophy of History*, to which he prefixed an introduction, that may be characterized as an extraordinary compound of light and darkness. In this composition the pantheistic idea again reigns paramount; absorbed in this one grand principle, the author plunges into the depths of mystery, and makes science itself minister to the gratification of his monomania. Likewise in his work entitled *De la Grèce Moderne*, he pursues the same train of thought whilst contemplating the monuments of history, which, far from checking the fervor of his metaphysical enthusiasm, only serve to feed it with additional fuel. One idea still animates him, and it is the all-pervading presence of the Deity.

M. Edgar Quinet is also a poet of promise. Although his metrical productions are marked by sundry extravagances, and his versification is not at all times the most harmonious, yet they are strewed with passages of surpassing beauty and brilliancy. He has published two collections of odes and elegies, respectively entitled *Prométhée* and *Napoleon*, which bear the same impress of an impetuous and incoherent mind, delirious, as it were, with tumultuous emotions. But this author is still young, and time will teach him the value of moderation, to which he is at present unfortunately insensible; and having acquired this necessary qualification, his fine talents, varied attainments, and soaring genius, may yet prove fruitful of good works, and establish for him a high and lasting celebrity in the republic of letters.

Now that we are on the point of closing our cursory review of the principal writers of fiction in France at the present day, we introduce a name at the very summit of popularity, which we have purposely abstained from previously mentioning, because we wished to separate it from the general crowd, on account of its representing a new order of novel. We need scarcely say it is that of Paul de Kock. The modern novel has been long dis-

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tinguished by these peculiarities—the society depicted is that of the higher class, the chief characters are endowed with extraordinary gifts of fortune and nature, the incidents are studied and overwrought, the language is stilted and unnatural, and the interest is remote and partial. Such, at least, are the characteristics of the so-called fashionable novel, which abounds in the literature of both France and England, and in which the authors have proceeded on the idea that ordinary life was inappropriate to the purpose of novel-writing, and must be deficient in interest; wherefore they go to circles of an artificial and exclusive character, and paint men and things, not as they exist, but with such exaggerations as they understand to be necessary to arouse "interest." Now, reflection has led the sensible mind of Paul de Kock to a different conclusion. He has seen that, in the common walks of life, in ordinary characters and manners, an inexhaustible mine of delineation might be worked; and that true and real pictures of society ought to be more universally attractive than overcharged and fabulous portraitures, in which the bulk of mankind could by no possibility feel any genuine sympathy. The result has proved the correctness of his opinion. All his works are upon subjects of a homely character, and yet they have obtained a much larger circulation than others of more imposing pretensions, amongst all classes of the community, including even the higher. His racy humor and exquisite sense of the ridiculous, joined to much graphic power of description, and an animated, natural style of composition (though dashed occasionally with inaccuracies), have secured him a more general applause than has been accorded to any living writer of fiction. Hence the envy and detraction of those who consider themselves much superior to him, and who profess to hold his talents in contempt. He occupies in France pretty nearly the position of Dickens in Great Britain; and there are many points of similarity between them. His productions, which are very numerous, are unequal in merit; some of them, indeed, may be reproached with indelicacy; but, upon the whole, the success they have met with may be deemed a favorable test of public taste, inasmuch as they are free from those bloated extravagances with which the works of his rivals teem.

In addition to the novelists we have noticed, we might give a long list of inferior aspirants, who swarm in the purlieus and buzz upon the confines of literature; but the enumeration would be both tedious and unprofitable. Still there are some isolated works that may be partially commended. Thus, the *Templiers*

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of M. Brisset is a highly finished romance, which has certainly not been appreciated as it deserved; his other works belong to the common order of novels. The novels of Mesdames Arnaud and Waldor are written with talent, as well as those of Madame Tastu. Finally, in the various fantastic productions of MM. Berthoud, Roger de Beauvoir, Alphonse Royer, Hyp. Lucas, Legouvé, Fortoul, and many others, may be found detached portions creditably executed, containing cleverly drawn portraits and descriptions.

Having thus brought our sketch of the modern novel and romance writers to a close, it is unnecessary for us to recapitulate the leading characteristics which distinguish them. We have unhappily too often had occasion to censure and condemn; for we have found them all more or less tainted with the prevailing vices and defects which we have pointed out. We have reason to hope, however, that the tide of reaction has set in, and that the light literature of France will ere long be freed from the impurities that have disgraced it, and assume a character more fitted to inspire the respect and approbation of the world. The prognostics of the coming change, derived from the altered tendencies of popular and influential writers, are abundant and palpable, and their speedy realization must be the earnest wish of every friend of order, religion, and morality.

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CHAPTER NINTH.

THE DRAMA.

Present State of the Drama in France.—Influence of Shakspeare—in France—in Germany.—Schiller and Goethe's Dramatic Compositions.—Definition of the *Drame* and *Tragédie*—Separate Origin, Meaning, and Tendency of both—their Subsequent History and Distinct Phases of Prosperity.—The Spirit of the *Drame* in Molière and Beaumarchais.—Flourishing State of the *Tragédie* during Absolute Royalty—its Fall with Despotism—its State during Napoleon's Reign and the Restoration.—Lemercier.—Raynouard.—M. Soumet—M. de Jouy.—Talma's Acting.—Final Ascendant of the *Drame* towards 1830.—M. Casimir Delavigne—his Dramatic Career—his *Vepres Siciliennes*—his *Marino Faliero*.—Lord Byron's *Marino Faliero*.—M. Delavigne's Subsequent Tragedies—*La Fille du Cid*—his *Ecole des Vieillards* and *Don Juan d'Autriche*.—Character of the New Drama—its Excesses—Perversion of its True Principles.—M. Victor Hugo's Dramatic Compositions—*Hernani*—Analysis of *Marion Delorme*—Beauties and Defects of that Play—Deep Pathos of the Last Scene.—M. Vitet's Historical Dramas.—M. Alexandre Dumas—his *Henri III. et sa Cour*, and Subsequent Plays.—M. Alfred de Vigny—his *Maréchale d'Ancre*—his *Othello* and *Chatterton*.—Other Dramatists.—Partial Return of the Tragedy.—Madlle. Rachel.—Erroneous Principles of the Dramatists.—Future and Complete Regeneration of the Drama under the Supreme Influence of Shakspeare.

THE description we have given, in the preceding chapter, of the unnatural and depraved state of fiction in France at the present time, applies still more forcibly to the Drama. Among the French novelists, we found some who merited praise—whose works afforded distinct evidence of the reformation in progress; whereas, among the dramatists, we fear we shall be unable to point out any whose productions are not so surcharged with faults, as to render unreserved encomium impossible. The dramatists form a numerous body of literati, who seem to spurn all laws and traditionary canons, and to indulge at caprice in the wildest conceits and innovations, striving apparently to surpass each other in extravagance and in the delineation of the most detestable vices and passions. Yet, amidst the hideous creations of this delirious race, a few works may be selected, which, although far from being perfect specimens of dramatic composition, are entitled to notice as best characterizing the present period of transition with regard to the drama. Such are the *Henri III.* of M. Alexandre Dumas, the *Maréchale d'Ancre* of M. Alfred de Vigny, and the plays of M. Victor Hugo, especially his *Ma-*

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rion Delorme, which, amidst many defects, contain beauties of the highest order. To these we shall hereafter more particularly advert.

The aberrations of the modern French dramatists arise principally from an egregious misconception of Shakspeare, whom they ambitiously attempt to imitate and rival. His name and those of Schiller and Goethe are perpetually on their lips, and yet the only development they aim at is that of sensual propensities, although these are lowest in the scale of themes for dramatic treatment, according to those great masters themselves. But, in truth, the eruption of English and German literature into France, caused a derangement and confusion necessarily attendant upon a sudden and extensive infusion of foreign elements. The old formal classic drama had fallen into decay and disrepute, and on the theatrical as on the political stage a new order of things was demanded by the innovating spirit of the times. Hence writers, anxious to conform to the bias of the public mind, had to create, as it were, a new school; and, in the absence of any commanding genius, their efforts were marked by all the irregularities of inexperienced and febrile excitement. The great models of other nations, hastily adopted and indistinctly understood, seemed to form standards whereon their compositions might be moulded; but those models were in many respects unsuited to French style and sentiment. Consequently, endeavors to imitate them led to productions of the most anomalous and unnatural character, wherein the stateliness of Shakspeare, the mysticism of the German, the impetuous frivolity and diseased imagination of France, were mingled in heterogeneous compound. Nevertheless, wherever the influence of Shakspeare is felt, it must be ultimately beneficial. Hitherto, from the perversion of taste, it may not have produced all those good effects to be anticipated from its extension in France; but they will naturally flow from it in time. Considering the national egotism of the French, and their propensity to follow implicitly native authorities, and considering the anathema of Voltaire, even the acknowledgment of Shakspeare as the undoubted master of the drama is in itself a mighty step; and, in proportion as he is studied, this belief will grow more general and stable, until it accomplishes that complete reformation which is equally desirable and inevitable. For he who has laid bare all the springs of human action, who has fathomed the mysteries of the human soul, is destined to exercise an influence co-existent and co-extensive with the world itself.

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We are not disposed to admit the claims of Goethe and Schiller to rank with Shakspeare, or to allow that they can be powerfully instrumental in working out the regeneration of the drama in France. Neither of them possesses the essential art of comprehending character in its illimitable shades, or of painting it free from German colors; neither is capable of disentangling himself from the mysticism and sentimentalism peculiar to his country, or of seizing the spirit, tone, and feelings of other ages and nations. They are deficient, too, in the stamp of reality; their delineations want that impress of truth and nature, that universality of application, for which Shakspeare's creations are so conspicuous. All this may be affirmed, as well of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, *Don Carlos*, and *Mary Stuart*, as of Goethe's *Torquato Tasso*. As poetical compositions, we confess their wondrous force and beauty; but when we compare them with the stupendous monuments of Shakspeare's genius, they sink into immeasurable inferiority. We read them with satisfaction and delight, but with none of that ecstasy of admiration with which we hang on the pages of the English bard—with which we revert again and again to his inimitable portraitures, to his grand and majestic passages. It is impossible that we can regard them as standards of dramatic perfection, or as fitted to obtain that general acceptation in France, which would give them any considerable sway over the formation of public taste, or render them potential elements in revolutionizing dramatic literature.

Before proceeding further with our subject, it will be necessary to notice certain peculiarities affecting the drama in France. The word *drame* has not the general signification, in the first place, of the English word *drama*, which embraces all that belongs to the stage; on the contrary, it is a distinctive appellation applied to an order of dramatic compositions, in opposition, we may say, to *tragédie*. Again, political influences have affected the destinies of the drama in France, insomuch that the *drame* is emblematic of popular preponderance, the *tragédie* of monarchical. Hence it is incumbent on us to trace the origin, as far as possible, of these two antagonist and incompatible forms, and to show how each has flourished on the decay and to the exclusion of the other, according as the principles of liberty or despotism have prevailed.

In this inquiry, we shall have no occasion to discuss the question of the revival of theatrical representations after the overthrow of Rome. We know that, in a very rude and gross form, they existed in France at a very early date. Thus, so far back

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as the ninth century, in one of the Capitulars of Hincmar, Bishop of Rheims, wherein priests are forbidden to get drunk under pretence of doing honor to the angels and the dead, we find a prohibition against farces being performed during their meals. The entertainments thus anathematised, were such buffooneries as prelates and barons were wont to beguile their hours of leisure withal, being grotesque and licentious dances, executed by persons in masks, whereby the spectators were animated to mirth and glee. In the mask, we perceive a tradition of the Greek and Roman stage, which continued to be respected for many centuries afterwards, through all the times of those extraordinary mummeries called *mysteries*, *moralities*, and so forth. Of course, the performers in such pieces were of a servile and degraded class; and we feel no surprize at an order of King Philip Augustus, directing the officers of his household to give their old clothes to his actors.

In the cloisters, as we are aware, a taste for classical literature was preserved and cherished, when all beside was immersed in ignorance and darkness; and to their erudite occupants we owe most of the treasures that have been transmitted from remote antiquity. Among the numerous productions that have issued from those learned retreats, there are some in the dramatic form, modelled on the ancient standards and on the canons of Aristotle, whose name and authority were revered as if sacred for many ages. These are the first efforts of the *tragédie* in modern times, and it was derived exclusively from classical sources. Its earliest framers sought their inspiration from Grecian models and rules, not from the observation of actual life, or from the discordant elements raging around him. Thus their effusions are like sickly exotics, transplanted to wild and stormy regions, where they bear no affinity to the face of nature, nor can take root and become naturalized. Hence it was only at long intervals that any production of the sort emerged from the scholastic brain of some solitary student, until a time arose peculiarly fitted for the reproduction of the ancient tragedy—a time when society was levelled beneath the yoke of absolute royalty. Then two great master-minds were found to give it adequate expression: under Corneille and Racine the French theatre attained a splendor and celebrity which yet live in the recollection of the world.

At the commencement of the fourteenth century, simultaneously with the enfranchisement of the boroughs, when the popular element first began to infuse itself into the State, when urban populations grew mutinous and independent, a native form

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of dramatic composition arose, adapted to the spirit of the times. It was chiefly allegorical; and one of the first productions of the class, by a Jew named Santo Rabbi, may be taken as emblematic of the whole. This Santo Rabbi had travelled much, and undergone many hardships and vicissitudes. As a play-wright he evinces considerable ingenuity, and evolves his moral in a striking and terrible manner. He compares human life to a ball, and entitles his piece the *Universal Dance*. The principal personages of the drama are Death, a priest, and a young maid. The ball opens amidst dazzling lights and the sounds of joy and mirth; the giddy throng is quickly absorbed in the pleasures of the scene; the sepulchral voice of the priest, exhorting and warning, is drowned in shouts of laughter and whisperings of love. But Death, too, was there present at the festival, in seductive guise, arrayed in smiles and flowers, to allure and deceive the thoughtless youths dancing by his side: towards the end of the ball he discovers himself, and all shrink away aghast from the horrible spectre, and strive to elude its fatal dart.

Such was the germ of the drame; it sprung from the ranks of the people, was conceived and fashioned according to popular ideas and tastes, and spoke to the senses and understandings of the great commonalty. It had nothing in common with the classic drama—no tie or connection with the past; it was altogether indigenous, and grew up ignorant and regardless of Greek and Latin models, or of the great dictator Aristotle.

Tragedy we find, on the contrary, has its root in a remote antiquity—in ages when manners and ideas were totally different from those of modern times. It is of artificial growth, the result of study and imitation; whereas the drame is the natural offspring of the soil, the spontaneous expression of actual and reigning influences. The distinction may be more intelligibly marked: the idea of tragedy has been derived from books, that of the drame from nature. Thus is the former purely artistic and formal, the latter pliable and of multiform shapes. Consequently, two rival dramatic camps have always existed in France —tragedy, the voice of sovereignty, rendered more imposing by speaking a language of past ages; and the drame, the voice of the multitude, adopting, by intuition, its language and tone, to move the passions and enhance the interest of the moment. We shall not attempt to follow the fortunes of the drame and tragedy in France during the last centuries: the former always appeared and gained ground when the people evinced a spirit of impatience and resistance; the latter, ever prosperous and flourishing un-

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der the shadow of despotism, has finally passed away with the last wreck of absolute power; and now the drame, livid and distorted with its long strangulation, is rising by the side of the constitutional government. Whilst feudalism survived, and kept royalty in check, the drame flourished in France, although rough in form; because the people, favored by the divisions between the crown and its vassals, enjoyed sundry franchises and liberties; but when Richelieu crushed the nobles, and gave unlimited power to the sceptre of his puppet, Louis XIII., tragedy came forth in all the pride of power, and stifled its democratic opponent. The great Corneille arose, followed by Racine; and the tragic muse was paramount, not alone by the favor of princes but by the force of genius. Voltaire came after, and, although preserving the royal form of tragedy, he, the revolutionary prophet, introduced several popular characters and sentiments, and made many innovations on the mould of Racine. The fermentation of the French people was beginning. At the explosion of the great revolution, the life of tragedy grew precarious; it was used only as an instrument to inflame the passions of hatred and revenge. Joseph Chénier exhibited on the stage the horrible massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the odious royalty of Charles IX.; the tragic forms were preserved, because they seemed indispensable for the introduction on the boards of crowned heads, whom it was intended to hold up to public scorn and detestation.

Napoleon, in again bending France beneath the sway of tyranny, encouraged the resurrection of the ancient tragedy. Under his sceptre, accordingly, we find an influx of plays on the classic model, and on classic subjects, all measured, grave, and didactic in tone, to be commended as specimens of art, but in language pompous and declamatory, and in action monotonous. But, although the outward expression of liberty was stifled under Napoleon, yet his empire was based, as it were, upon the voice of the people, since it had been conferred by their suffrages; his was not the monarchy of Louis XIV., who claimed to govern despotically by divine right, but rested distinctly upon the principle of election. Thus it is that, in several of the tragedies of his time, we detect traces of the drame, whereby they seem, like those of M. Casimir Delavigne in our own epoch, to be allied with both the hostile schools. Many of the productions brought forward at the commencement of the century, attained great celebrity, and were long held in high repute: such were the *Templiers* of M. Raynouard, the *Agamemnon*, of M. Lemer-

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cier, and *La Mort d'Hector*, by Luce de Lancival. M. Lemercier, who proved so successful in the classic tragedy by his *Agamemnon*, failed many years after in an attempt to create a new historical drama, by a play called *Pinto*. The other popular tragedies of that period were—*Manlius*, by Lafosse; *Marius*, by Arnault; the imitations of Shakspeare by Ducis, especially *Hamlet;* the *Marie Stuart* of Lebrun; *Sylla*, *Regulus*, *Bélisaire*, by M. de Jouy; and, somewhat later, the fine tragedies of *Cléopatre*, *Jeanne d'Arc*, *Elizabeth de France*, and *Norma*, by M. Soumet of Toulouse. At the same time, much of the success that attended the greater number of these tragedies, was doubtless owing to the extraordinary talent of the great actor Talma, and to the able assistance of Madlle. Duchesnois; indeed, it may be conjectured that, had not Talma flourished at that time, many of these pieces would scarcely have survived a first representation, and perhaps never have been written at all. After the fall of Napoleon, and the partial invasion of foreign literature, tragedy lingered for some years longer on the French stage; it continued to be cultivated by Casimir Delavigne, who was, however, unable to arrest its downward tendency; and at length it fell prostrate and exhausted, never to rise again. The French stage has been since wholly occupied by the drame, with its various forms and extravagances; or by the higher comedy, depicting the manners of society, or prominent social features; such are the admirable *Bertrand et Raton*, the *Camaraderie*, *Une Passion Secrète*, *L'Ambitieux*, *La Calomnie*, *Le Verre d'Eau*, by M. Scribe, and various comedies of M. and Madame Amelot, MM. Soulié, Alexandre Dumas, D'Espagny, Empis, and others.

Before quitting this subject—the distinction between the tragedy and the drame—let us see how the two styles, the two systems, touched each other when, during the absolute sway of royalty, genius felt the impulse of liberty, as in Molière and Beaumarchais. Shakspeare was fortunate in the land of his nativity; anywhere else, perhaps, his genius might have been fettered, or condemned to pine in obscurity. As it was, born amongst a free people, and himself belonging to the people, brought up, too, in the expansive ideas of the Reformation, his position was a singularly advantageous one for a regenerator of the drama. His plays are accordingly resplendent, not alone with the evidences of a great master-mind, but with the independence of thought, the boldness of expression, and the severity of delineation, which show him unawed by depressive influences. He could follow the inspirations of his mighty spirit, and wield the truncheon of

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a daring reformer. Thus he is the very Luther of the drama; he braved and subverted the authority of Aristotle as the German monk did that of Leo X. But in France, Molière, although strongly imbued with popular tendencies, was obliged to be circumspect in manifesting sentiments offensive to royalty; a dependant upon the king, and under terror of *lettres de cachet*, it was impossible he could allow his pen the full scope to which his native intrepidity would have prompted him. That the restriction chafed and galled him is, we think, apparent in his works, which, after all, evince an extraordinary boldness for the age and country in which he lived. His satire stops short only of the throne; keen and barbed, it strikes irreverently even at the clergy, then so powerful in the state. His *Tartuffe* has justly excited admiration, not only for the genius but for the wonderful audacity it displays. That, at a time when bigotry was so jealous and rampant, it should have been applauded, even tolerated, in the theatre of Versailles, has always appeared a subject of astonishment. His *Don Juan*, likewise, indicates considerable hardihood; it exposes the dissolute manners of society with unsparing severity, and holds up to ridicule and odium a heartless and profligate nobility. Thus, Molière is the Aristophanes of the French stage, without the boundless license enjoyed and exercised by the Athenian wit; his mind was decidedly of the popular cast, and his pieces combine the essential characteristics of the drame.

During the eighteenth century, the spirit of the drame lurked powerfully in Beaumarchais. His *Mariage de Figaro* has obtained a more general celebrity than perhaps any piece that was ever produced. Beaumarchais, with his trenchant wit, his bold assurance, and a quick perception of that which lay on the surface of things, chose the element best suited to his powers; there he swam buoyantly, and in his comedies reflected as in a mirror the society around him. We see the immorality of his age in the immorality of his works, and marvel equally at the effrontery and licentiousness of his delineations. Beaumarchais is the Congreve of France.

Previous to prosecuting our inquiry into the elements and condition of the reigning dramatic school, we will pause a moment upon M. Casimir Delavigne, who, while all other dramatists abandoned the field of tragedy, alone continued to cultivate it, though, in deference to the taste of the day, with an inclination towards the drame. Hence he has been sometimes called the Eclectic Dramatist, from his attempts to amalgamate the rival

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schools. But, strictly speaking, all his compositions are tragedies, which, for fifteen years, have maintained a painful struggle against the current of popular desires, and which, though not destitute of faults, have contrived, by force of sundry merits, and much exquisite poetry, to contest the ascendency of the drame.

When the French public began to manifest the desire for a new dramatic form—for a drama more in unison with and expressive of the spirit of the times—M. Casimir Delavigne endeavored to meet this national want by his *Vêpres Siciliennes* and *Le Paria*. Of these two tragedies, the first only was successful. The perpetual interest of its subject, the character of Procida, and the sentiments of liberty that abound in it, endeared it for sometime to a fastidious public. It appeared in 1824. The *Paria*, which followed, met with the most frigid reception, in spite of some very good passages against the Inquisition and priesthood. M. Delavigne saw the failure of his system: he would not break with tragedy, but only force this proud queen to bend her cold dignity to more pliant, attractive and natural forms; he felt evidently a secret terror of the pure drame, in like manner as the government of his time shrunk with abhorrence from the constitutional demands of the people. He ventured, however, on another experiment. After preserving a long silence, he produced a political play on a subject already handled by Lord Byron, *Marino Faliero*. He remarks, in the preface, that toleration was now the order of the day, and that he had studied to observe its spirit and the dictates of liberality in this new preparation. But *Marino Faliero*, thus inspired, was not, in the truest sense of the word, a tragedy; and the author was himself so conscious of it, that he abstained from designating it as such, in opposition to the practice he adopted with regard to his preceding and subsequent plays. In this composition, therefore, he advanced more nearly to a medium between the two styles, and, as in the case of all half-and-half measures, he pleased nobody. The poetry of the piece is nevertheless often very beautiful. A comparative glance on the two *Marino Falieros*, French and English, will, we trust, not be deemed misplaced.

Byron's *Marino Faliero* was too severely judged by contemporary critics; they condemned it as a drama, when it should have been admired as a dramatic poem, in which light the poet himself considered it, as well as his other works of the same class. Byron's *Faliero* scarcely belongs to the drama; his mind, distempered by unruly passions, broods over the sense of injuries inflicted, and seeks relief in a succession of invectives. The

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doge is affected with the morbid sensibilities of the author, touched to the quick by unmerited wrongs and contumelies, which explode in reveries, soliloquies, and denunciations; these form the awful texture of the poem, and their grandeur vanishes in the dialogue and action. M. Delavigne, although imitating the English play, completely divests Marino Faliero of all the Byronian majesty and Byronian pathos in his composition. In the French poet we find none of those lofty, shadowy, vague, sublime associations with the mighty dead—no obscure intimations of a foreboding spirit—no soul-subduing regrets—no affecting recollections of former fortunes—finally, no powerfully contrasted feelings. He reduces the moral dignity of the English hero, of the formidable doge, to the good nature of a feeble old man; but, on the other hand, throws great action and movement into the play. He avows his flagrant imitations; he says that he has appropriated *plusieurs des inspirations* of the genius he so much admired; but these imitations, although sometimes very successful, are generally unhappy parodies. We will adduce instances of both kinds to corroborate our assertion.

Byron's doge addresses these affecting words to his young wife:

> "I knew my days could not disturb you long:
> And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
> His worthy daughter, free to choose again
> Wealthier and wiser."

But they only draw these two lines from the French poet:—

> "'C'est un jour à passer,' me disais-je, 'et demain
> Je lui laisse mon nom, de l'opulence, un titre.'"
>
> ["It is but for a day," said I, "and then
> I pass; and she wealth, name, and rank will gain."]

Afterwards, in melancholy anticipation of his approaching doom, he adds in the English, tenderly, poetically, but diffusely—

> "When I am nothing, let that which I was
> Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips."

M. Delavigne only exclaims, briefly and trivially—

> "Vivez, soyez heureuse, et pensez au vieillard."
>
> [Live thou, be happy, and of th' old man think.]

We will give another example, still more unfavorable to M. Delavigne. Byron's conspirators hold a language worthy of Roman dignity, reminding us of the second Brutus. They exclaim—

> "We will not strike for private wrongs alone. . .
> We will be free in life and death! the grave

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Is chainless. . .
Our fathers did not fly from Attila
Into these isles, . .
To own a thousand despots in his place."

The conspirators of the French play talk, on the contrary, much more like sensual brigands—like common-place cut-throats:

"Guerre au puissant! à son or! à ses
Vins de Grèce et d'Italie!
Leurs palais sont à nous; j'en veux un—choisissons!"
[War to the mighty! to his gold! his wines
Of Grecian birth, or from Italian vines!
Their palaces are ours; choose we—one must be mine.]

On the other hand, in justice to M. Delavigne, we will take the following description of the pains of exile, as a favorable specimen of his poetry, and as a brilliant imitation:

"Mais c'est désespoir
Que n'ont pu, dans l'exil, sentir ni concevoir,
Tous ces heureux bannis de qui l'humeur légère
A fait des étrangers sur la rive étrangère.
C'est ce dégoût d'un sol que voudraient fuir nos pas;
C'est ce vague besoin des lieux où l'on n'est pas,
Ce souvenir qui tue; oui, cette fièvre lente,
Qui fait rêver du ciel, de la patrie absente.
C'est ce mal du pays dont rien ne peut guérir,
Dont tous les jours on meurt sans jamais en mourir!"
Act 1, *Scene* 2.

[It is a black despair
Not to be felt nor yet conceived by those,
The happy exiles, whom a passing whim
Hath sent as strangers to a stranger shore.
The deep disgust of soil our feet would shun—
A vague desire for spots where we are not—
This is the thought that kills! Yes! this slow fever,
Fill'd up with dreams of lands and skies afar!
This home-thirst is the ill incurable,
Of which we daily die, yet still live on.]

After *Marino Faliero*, M. Casimir Delavigne wrote *Louis XI.*; but in the interval a great political event had taken place—the Revolution of 1830. The intermediary point kept by the poet was no longer possible: together with the popular triumph, the drame asserted its supremacy. Its approach had been already indicated by the preface of M. Victor Hugo to *Cromwell*, and by the *Henri III. et sa Cour* of M. Alexandre Dumas—both presented to the public, the former through the press, the latter through the stage, during the political fermentation of the country—and immediately after the revolution it came forth in all the

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pride of conquest. Then appeared the *Maréchale d'Ancre* of M. Alfred de Vigny, and the *Marion Delorme* of M. Victor Hugo, which, following the *Henri* of M. Dumas, at once established the exclusive dominion of the drame. Meanwhile, M. Casimir Delavigne, disdaining, we presume, to follow a track trodden by rivals, returned to pure tragedy; and he called *Louis XI.* "a tragedy in five acts," although Louis XI., with his childish fears and mean jealousies, forever associated with his barber and hangman, affords the sorriest theme for the tragic muse of all modern sovereigns. Thus the efforts and great poetical talents of the author have been in a great measure thrown away; he has wasted his high faculties in a style of drama, and on subjects, that are either beneath the dignity of real tragedy, or not in harmony with the taste and spirit of the times. The consequence is, that the productions of this eminent poet have been received with continually increasing indifference; *Louis XI.* was performed for a brief interval, as also *Les Enfans d'Edouard*, which succeeded it, on a similar plan, but both encountered a mortifying reception. *Une Famille au Temps de Luther*, produced about three years ago, was speedily consigned to oblivion; and the last of his courageous efforts to revive the expiring tragedy, *La Fille du Cid*, scarcely saw the light ere it met the common doom.

Still, it is universally admitted that M. Casimir Delavigne is a poet of no ordinary pretensions, although following an exploded and unpopular system; poetic beauties of the highest order teem in all these unsuccessful dramatic compositions. If we take the last-named play, for instance, the most unfortunate of all, we turn from the title-page, and find at the commencement a dedication to the Spanish nation, which none can read without feeling it to be the effusion of a truly poetic mind. After having vividly depicted the fertilizing influence of the brilliant sun of the Peninsula, he thus proceeds:—

" Il est un soleil plus beau,
Dont la nuit ne peut plus envahir le domaine:
Sur un peuple affranchi qu'il arrache au tombeau,
Il fait fleurir des rois l'équité souveraine,
Fait germer les vertus aux feux de son flambeau,
Et mûrit les moissons de la pensée humaine.
Ce soleil que tes fils ont vu poindre sur eux—
Ce radieux géant qui doit grandir encor—
Il sort pur des vapeurs d'une sanglante aurore;
C'est de la liberté le soleil généreux!"

[There is a sun more beauteous still and bright,
Whose reign no more can be usurp'd by night:
O'er a free people, snatch'd by it from fate,

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It places kingly justice, pure as great,
Matures the harvest of the human thought,
And tends all nobler virtues to promote.
This sun, which in thy children's sight hath dawn'd—
This mighty meteor, yet to be more grand—
Shines through the vapors of a bloody sky;
It is the generous sun of liberty !]

Surely this is a beautiful idea, and very finely expressed. Such passages of glowing fancy and lofty sentiment abound in all his dramatic works. It is certainly to be regretted that he did not at once frankly embrace the new form of drama so obviously demanded by the public feeling; for he might have tended to check the excesses into which the modern drame has run, and must have inevitably embellished it by the contributions of his accomplished and powerful mind.

M. Delavigne has, indeed, upon certain occasions, abandoned the tragic muse for comedy; and from the high favor enjoyed by two of his efforts in this line, it appears the more surprizing that he has not oftener followed it. His *Ecole des Vieillards*, illustrated by the acting of Talma and Madlle. Mars, had a permanent success. Of late years, his *Don Juan D'Autriche* was generally admired, although many defects impair the interest and detract from the merit of the piece; as, for example, the air of buffoonery he throws over the conduct and language of Charles V. in his old age, and the introduction of various improbable scenes between a Jewess and Philip II. of Spain, as also of some ridiculous intrigues in the convent of the retired sovereign. After the petulant Don Juan, the cold-blooded tyrant Philip is the best delineation of the comedy; we recognize in him, at a younger period of life, the same implacable fanatic whom we behold in the *Don Carlos* of Schiller, and the *Filipo II.* of Alfieri, in more mature age.

Let us now revert to the new school, which is distinct from comedy and tragedy, combining both as in Shakspeare, and forming the distinct species called drame. The drame disregards all unities and other peculiarities of the classic form, introducing the irregular in contrast to the regular as an element of art. It enlarges, also, the circle of poetical creations, by leaving the confined track of ancient history and mythology, to ransack the middle ages for heroes, and to bring national history on the stage. The principles upon which the modern French drama is based, are, as we have seen, of early and native growth in France, and have long prevailed, as is well known, in the English drama.

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These principles are in themselves salutary and sensible; but, in adopting or reviving them, the difficulty has been to adhere to them—to keep within and not overleap their limits—and to observe in all other respects the accredited laws of dramatic propriety. Unfortunately, this difficulty has been found too great by the majority of play-wrights, and deplorable abuses have resulted, to which the present melancholy condition of the French drama is entirely to be attributed.

The French dramatists have construed the license of irregularity into a license for everything grotesque and horrible. Let us take the master himself, Victor Hugo, and see what he has done in his *Le Roi s'Amuse*, for instance. Here we find him actuated by one of those incongruous ideas, in which he and others seem to feel such strange delight. He takes a deformed fool, the king's jester, Triboulet, and invests him with the dignity of exalted paternal feelings, seeking to represent the sublime and the degraded in close alliance. This is altogether unnatural; and the whole piece, with the flagitious Francis, *le preux chevalier*, as its hero, is repulsive to taste and decency. But this idea of compounding deformity with some ennobling sentiment, and elevating its object into a character of interest, is not confined to physical deformity, but extends also to moral. Thus Victor Hugo maintains, in one of his prefaces, that, if you conceive the utmost stretch of moral depravity, and endow therewith—as he has done in *Lucrèce Borgia*—the mind of a woman, but plant in her breast at the same time the fervent sentiment of maternity, the monster will interest you, make you weep, and appear, despite her vice and guilt, a fair and lovely creation. That his opinion was most erroneous, he has himself proved in his delineation of Lucretia Borgia, whose crimes are assuredly neither palliated nor redeemed by her possession of a feeling which she holds in common with the wolf and the tigress.

When such perverted principles are propounded and acted upon by the leading and most popular dramatist of the day, we are sensible that in his hands, at least, the regeneration of the drama is not to be worked out. Accordingly, the thinking part of the community has long abandoned all hope of seeing Victor Hugo devote his eminent faculties to accelerate that desirable consummation. When his *Hernani* appeared, about eleven years ago, expectations were aroused that he was destined to occupy the lofty position of a dramatic reformer, but they have since been woefully belied. In his preface he observes that in this play he lays the first stone of an edifice which he shall here-

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after rear upon a plan sketched in his own mind, where it has since remained dormant apparently, for it has never yet been realized.

Hernani, although open to very serious objections, is superior to many of the abominable compilations which have succeeded it; and thus the base of the edifice, if it is to be considered one, is composed of better materials than the superstructure. Setting aside *Marion Delorme*, which is his best drama, his subsequent productions have gradually grown more outrageous, until his last effusion, *Ruy Blas*, and one that preceded it, *Marie Tudor*, have made even his friends and admirers blush, and regard him as laboring under some grievous hallucination or fatuity. Still, as we remarked with regard to this extraordinary man's novels, these dramatic compositions sparkle with innumerable beauties of thought, device, and expression, which gleam as twinkling lights in a dark and perturbed atmosphere.

Hernani was obviously inspired by the study of Spanish history and poetry—by Calderon, and the old Romanceros. The life of the play is derived from the romantic spirit of Spanish feeling; the picture of manners seems accurately and naturally drawn; and the exalted principle of Castilian honor, the hinge upon which the piece turns, is exhibited in striking and varied lights. But, on the other hand, there are perpetual violations of both dramatic and grammatical laws, as well as flagrant deviations from historical truth—deviations for which, indeed, Victor Hugo's pieces are conspicuous, notwithstanding the adherence to history he professes to uphold in his prefaces. The character of Charles V., as represented in *Hernani*, is opposed to all received impressions, and to our conceptions of the probable. That monarch has been universally described as cold, reserved, and phlegmatic; yet we find him in this play a wild and reckless gallant, intent upon the gratification of an illicit passion. And this at a time, too, when ambition usurped his heart to the necessary exclusion of love; for those two most violent of the human affections can scarcely dwell together in the same breast. Consequently, it is repugnant to probability that the aspirant to the imperial throne, cautious and prudent as we know him to have been, should risk his life in a midnight adventure for the love he bore a pretty damsel; but M. Victor Hugo scruples not to engage him in such an adventure.

During the first three acts of *Hernani*, Charles is indefatigable in his pursuit after the possession of Dona Sol, the object of his passion, and likewise after the destruction of Hernani, who,

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the scion of a noble family, has been banished, and is at the head of a powerful band of outlaws. This hero is also enamored of Dona Sol, who ardently reciprocates his love. Hernani, pursued by the emperor, takes refuge in the castle of old Ruy Gomez, the young maiden's guardian and protector, upon whose heart, too, her charms have made a deep impression. The chivalrous Castilian protects Hernani against the fury of the monarch, and, what is more, in order to save his ward from the grasp of Charles, he intrusts her to the safe keeping of the outlaw, who gives him his horn, and pledges the honor of a Castilian, to swallow poison, if, when the old man sounds the horn, Dona Sol be not returned to him. In the fourth act, the wrath of Charles against Hernani and his love for Dona Sol have subsided. He has been elected Emperor of Germany, and signalizes his accession by magnanimous sacrifices; he restores Hernani to his rank and wealth, and weds him to Dona Sol. A festival is held to celebrate their union, from the glare and pomp of which the youthful couple retire to a lonely terrace, where, oblivious of the past in the ecstacy of present enjoyment, they breathe the blissful atmosphere known only to enraptured lovers. Suddenly Hernani hears the sound of the fatal horn. Ruy Gomez approaches to exact fulfilment of his pledge. Hernani yields to the strength of Castilian honor, and confides the secret to his bride. She determines to share his fate; and, amid indistinct murmurings of affection, they expire, from the effects of a deadly potion, locked in each other's arms. Such the direful catastrophe of the piece.

We have already intimated that *Marion Delorme* may be considered as by far the best of Victor Hugo's dramas, and as one of the very few that stand aloof from the mass of senseless and revolting compositions which disgrace the age. We therefore propose to give an analytic sketch of this play, as a favorable illustration of the author. Marion, the heroine of the piece, is no less a personage than the celebrated beauty and courtezan who flourished in the time of Louis XIII. But her depravity is not that of a Lucrèce Borgia, who, notwithstanding the warmth of her maternal affection, remains a fiend eaten up with the vulture of desire. Marion's soul becomes purified by deep love; the pangs of remorse afflict and chasten her; she execrates her past life, and is recommended to our sympathy by her devotedness and regeneration. At the opening of the drama, Marion has secretly left the brilliant court of Paris for the privacy of Blois, whither she has followed Didier, for whom she has conceived a

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violent passion. The opening scene shows her waiting anxiously for his arrival: instead of him, however, the Marquis de Saverny presents himself. The latter, a former lover, has pursued her from Paris, curious to know the object of her journey. His appearance naturally throws her into great agitation; she implores him to depart, which he only consents to do on her confessing that she is expecting a lover. The Marquis de Saverny is a gay and frivolous courtier of the time, admirably sketched, and forming a fine contrast with the depth and earnestness of Didier's nature.

This first scene affords an insight into Marion's previous history. At length the lovers meet: Didier falls at the feet of Marion, who gazes on him with throbbing interest, and reads in his eyes his unfathomable tenderness. From his lips she learns the story of his life. He is a foundling, whose life has been passed in the struggles of the world. The hypocrisy, injustice, and selfishness of his fellow-creatures, have reduced his too sensitive mind to a state of misanthropy—not that affected, obtrusive misantropy which has become fashionable since the Byronian and Chateaubriand fever infected mankind—but a silent, corroding melancholy, uncheered by a ray of hope. With this blight upon his soul he is a wanderer on the earth—poor, friendless, unloved, and unknown. In this condition, he meets with Marion (with whose real name he is unacquainted, knowing her only as Marie), and her beauty was the sunbeam that first gladdened the desolation of his mind. When he has terminated his recital, Marion says, playfully, "You are singular; but I love you thus." He quickly asks, whether she knows what she has uttered—whether she knows what love is; and he straightway proceeds to describe it. She then assures him of the depth of her passion; tells how she secretly followed him; avows that she has resigned her life and soul to him. Didier, enraptured, demands of her to *prove* it: she asks what proof; he replies—"Marriage." Here, in a fine scene that occurs, begins the morality of the play—we say morality, because the conception and argument of the piece are intrinsically of a moral nature, although it contains one scene and a few expressions, that are exceptionable. Marion, the courtezan, deeply enamored of Didier, is tortured by the contending feelings which prevent her from accepting his offer or explaining her motives of refusal. The whole scene is full of pathos. Marion is cruelly punished for her previous career—for her offence against virtue.

The second act opens with a meeting between some courtiers,

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who, after discussing sundry topics of interest to such characters, confer together on the subject of an edict issued by Richelieu, inflicting the penalty of death on all duellists. Didier, brooding over the insulting manner and libertine looks of the Marquis de Saverny, whom he had encountered for a moment in the presence of Marion, enters during their conversation, observes the Marquis among them, provokes him to draw, and they fight under the very lantern placed to light Richelieu's edict. Marion enters, and seeing her lover's danger, tries to separate them; not succeeding, she calls thoughtlessly for the guards, who hasten and arrest them. Death will be the fate of both combatants; but Brichanteau whispers Saverny, who is wounded, to pretend he is killed, and he forthwith acts upon the hint by falling to the ground. Didier is arrested according to the edict, and the supposed dead marquis borne off by his friends.

In the third act, Marion has effected Didier's escape from prison, and, disguised as Spaniards, they have joined a troop of players. Saverny has likewise assumed the disguise of an officer. Several delightful scenes, fraught with every poetic charm and grace, take place between the lovers; careless of all around them, they drink deep of the intoxicating cup of love. Saverny appears, and recognizes Marion in the distance. A new character now comes forward, one of Richelieu's formidable agents, Laffemas, the *lieutenant criminel*, who is seeking Didier and Marion. Saverny accosts him, and asks him to guess whom he has recognized among the players, and he tells him—Marion Delamore! But Didier, who is in the background, overhears their conversation, and a scene afterwards takes place in which the latter gives him the portrait of Marion, which, to his horror, he recognizes as that of his Marie: while he stands overwhelmed and stupified at the discovery, Saverny enumerates the list of her lovers. Didier, striken with anguish, scarcely heeds him; his misanthropy returns, and with it a fearful longing for death. He resigns himself willingly to Laffemas, as the murderer of Saverny. Marion afterwards throws herself at the feet of the *lieutenant criminel*, to implore her lover's release; but Laffemas is deaf to her prayers, and pleads the impossibility of evading his duty, adding, that if the victim of the duel—if the Marquis de Saverny, were not dead, then a great deal might be hoped; indeed, his safety almost ensured: upon which Saverny throws off his disguise, declaring Didier no murderer; but this only ends in his being also arrested, under the edict of prohibition against duelling, for Laffemas is as bloodthirsty as his master Richelieu.

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The fourth act is a good historical painting, but a fault in the dramatic art, for it is almost wholly digressive. Louis XIII. is introduced, and his feeble nature, the capricious movements of his depraved heart, forcibly depicted. The old uncle of Saverny, and Marion, gain an audience of him; they come to solicit the pardon of the duellists. The old man's energetic and noble representations, form an admirable contrast with the soft and melting entreaties of Marion; in the end, the king consents to pardon them, and they withdraw.

The fifth act is the most pathetic of all, and is replete with scenes of painful and intense interest. Marion is on the point of entering her lover's prison, with his pardon signed by the king, when she encounters Laffemas, who dashes her joy by showing her a revocation of the king's pardon; and here ensues a scene most graphically wrought, which may be pronounced immoral when viewed superficially and in its outward aspect, but on the contrary truly moral and exalted, when considered in its deep tragical sense—if looked upon as a manifestation of profound passion. Marion, purified by the ennobling influence of love, with her mind recast and regenerated, consents, in order to save her lover, with an agonized heart, with horror and loathing, to gratify the brutal lust of Laffemas. We are ready to condemn the too expressive details of this scene, despite their fine coloring, because they are objectionable on the score both of art and taste, offending delicacy, and marring the impressiveness of the harrowing sacrifice, otherwise so thrillingly portrayed. But we demur to the hasty judgment of those fastidious critics, who denounce the subject as altogether improper and unsuitable, seeing that in Shakspeare's *Measure for Measure*, as well as in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid's Tragedy*, a precisely similar subject is treated, and in a far more offensive manner too: yet these plays are read and applauded, without any fulsome exceptions to their immorality.

But poor Marion's self-sacrifice and heroism—the loathsome ordeal through which she passes to save her adored lover (the bitter consciousness whereof was so sublimely expressed by one little trait—her kneeling before his prison door previous to following her vile tempter, as if imploring pardon for the sin her love was about to commit)—all is without effect and useless, for Didier will not accept of his dearly purchased rescue. The scene that occurs between them previous to his being led to the scaffold with Saverny, is marked by the deepest pathos; the passionate entreaties of Marion, the calm resignation of Didier, their

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affecting reconcilement before death, and their mutual pardon, are all vividly given. Didier yields to her entreaties for his forgiveness and farewell: his heart is bursting, he takes her in his arms, and says—

" Viens, pauvre femme!
* * * * *
Oh! viens, que je te dise! Entre toutes les femmes,
Et ceux qui sont ici m'approuvent dans leurs âmes,
Celle que j'aime, celle à qui reste ma foi,
Celle que je vénère enfin c'est encore toi!
Car tu fus bonne, douce, aimante, dévouée!
Ecoute moi: ma vie est déjà dénouée,
Je vais mourir, la mort fait tout voir au vrai jour.
Va, si tu m'as trompé, c'est par excès d'amour!
Et ta chûte d'ailleurs, l'as tu pas expiée?
Ta mère en ton berceau t'a peut-être oubliée
Comme moi. Pauvre enfant! tout jeune, ils auront
Vendu ton innocence! * * *
Ah! relève ton front!
—Ecoutez tous! A l'heure où je suis, cette terre
S'efface comme une ombre, et la bouche est sincère!
Hé bien, en ce moment, du haut de l'échafaud,
Quand l'innocent y meurt, il n'est rien de plus haut!
Marie, ange du ciel que la terre a flétrie,
Mon amour, mon épouse!. écoute moi, Marie—
Au nom du Dieu, vers qui la mort va m'entraînant,
Je te pardonne.

MARION (*étouffée de larmes*).
Ciel!

DIDIER.
A ton tour maintenant.
[*Il s'agenouille devant elle.*
Pardonne moi!

MARION.
Didier!

DIDIER (*toujours à genoux*).
Pardonne moi, te dis je!
C'est moi qui fus méchant. Dieu te frappe et t'afflige
Par moi! Tu daigneras encor pleurer ma mort.
Avoir fait ton malheur—va c'est un grand remord!
Ne me laisse pas—pardonne moi, Marie!"

[Poor woman, come!
* * * *
Oh! come that I may speak! Of all thy kind—
And those now here approve me in their souls—
She whom I love, to whom my faith is knit,
She whom I venerate, is still thyself!
For thou wert good, devoted, gentle, loving!
Listen to me; my life is well-nigh closed;
I go to die, and death throws day o'er all.
Go, thy deceit sprang from excess of love!

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Ay, and thy fall—has it not been atoned for?
Thy mother might forget thee in thy cradle,
Haply, like me. Poor child! Thy innocence
Was doubtless sold in infancy. * *
Look up!
—Listen all here! In this dread hour, the earth
Fades like a shadow, and the lips are true!
'Tis at this moment, from the scaffold's crown,
When innocence dies there, it o'erlooks all!
Marion, thou angel whom the world hath crush'd,
My love, my wife! My Marion, list to me—
In name of God, to whom death drags me now,
I pardon thee!

MARION (*with broken sobs*).
Oh, Heaven!

DIDIER.
'Tis now thy turn.
[*He kneels before her.*
Give me thy pardon!

MARION.
Didier!

DIDIER (*still kneeling*).
Yes, I say thy pardon!
I was the wicked one. For me, God strikes
And vexes thee! Yet wilt thou weep my death.
To have caused thy ills—ah! deep remorse springs thence!
Leave me not—Marion, give me thy forgiveness.]

This is a fine burst of poetry and passion, true to the sensibilities of nature in high excitement. The conclusion of the drama moves to pity and sympathy, and leaves also on the mind a wholesome impression of the beauty of virtue, showing how difficult it is for subsequent contrition and atonement to remove the stigma of vice. Still, the fitness of such a character as Marion Delamore to become the heroine of a piece may be doubted; much difference of opinion exists on the point, and a great deal may be said on both sides of the question. Meanwhile, the admirers of Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, or Horne's *Death of Marlowe*, will incline to view the matter in a favorable light, and to acquit M. Victor Hugo of all blame on the score of his selection.

The revolution effected in the French drama of late years, was likewise powerfully accelerated by M. Vitet's historical plays. They were not written for the stage, but merely to be read. The *Barricades*, published in 1827, is a drama of the time of the League, in which Henri III., the Duke of Guise, and sundry other great personages of the era, appear as prominent characters. They are represented with great regard to historical truth, which is, however, deviated from in the description of the Leaguers, who are made to bear too strong a resemblance to

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Sir Walter Scott's Puritans, from whom they differed materially. The French Leaguer was ferocious and bigoted doubtless, but he was merry too, and had nothing of the burning fanaticism about him which distinguished the Scottish Covenanters or the English Roundheads. Still, the applause bestowed on this work of M. Vitet was well deserved, for it presents, in faithful and impressive colors, an important episode in the religious wars of France, and evinces a deep insight into the circumstances of the times. It has the merit, indeed, of throwing great light on the period in question, from a happy distribution of numerous authentic anecdotes and traits, drawn from original sources; and the style, moreover, being pure and animated, the composition is unquestionably one of more than ordinary value and attraction. The extensive erudition on which the piece is founded, is manifested in the historical introduction.

Similar praise is to be accorded to *Les Etats de Blois*, another historical drama of the same author. Here M. Vitet exhibits in a new light, derived from his diligent researches on the subject, the character of the Duke of Guise, and the obstacles his ambition had to encounter. Most historians have asserted, that, if the Duke had taken but one step more, he might have dethroned Henri III. and the Capetian dynasty. The author of the *Etats de Blois* judges the case differently, and gives a new key to the whole policy and conduct of Guise. The words uttered by the duke, among other prudential reasons, when urged to strike a last blow against the king—"Go to, a royalty that has subsisted for five hundred years, and is flanked by a *bourgeoisie*, is a fortress not to be taken by a first assault. Ah! if there were none but monks and nobles!"—sufficiently express his sense of the impediments that checked his ambition, and prevented him from attempting the last decisive step to subvert the existing dynasty and usurp the throne. These impediments arose, as he intimates, from the *bourgeoisie*—from that urban population which was beginning to gather strength, to think, and to act, and which he reproachfully described as "that hard-headed race." For the rest, the bold and haughty temper of the duke is well delineated in the course of the piece, and he stands in advantageous contrast with the treacherous, dissembling, and imbecile monarch, Henri III.

These dramas of M. Vitet being strictly historical, cannot claim the movement and action which distinguish the mixed productions of MM. Dumas and Hugo; but, nevertheless, so much dramatic art is exhibited in their composition, that the interest is always well sustained, and the catastrophe is striking and impres-

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sive. Formed somewhat on the model of Manzoni's historical dramas, which were published several years before, they have doubtless contributed to stimulate the re-action we have heretofore alluded to.

M. Alexandre Dumas, however, has exercised a yet more considerable influence, and given great popularity to the recent dramatic innovations, by his first and best play, *Henri III. et sa Cour*. If we put aside a few improbable details, this play is a faithful and animated picture of the period intended to be represented. The workings of passion, too, are admirably displayed in a succession of startling scenes. The principal characters are drawn with surprizing force and originality, and the plot is developed with a perfect perception of dramatic effect.

M. Dumas, indeed, possesses, in a very high degree, the art of exciting curiosity, while he keeps it in suspense. The action of his plays proceeds with incredible vivacity, and he often deeply stirs the feelings by abrupt, exclamatory phrases of thrilling power; but his dramas must be seen on the stage; they act infinitely better than they read, because the negligence of composition which marks them is less perceptible, or is overlooked in the accidents and bustle of representation. This defect of careless and hurried labor, may be ranked as one of the causes that have operated so fatally against M. Dumas in his subsequent efforts. He, like Victor Hugo, commenced his dramatic career with the fairest promises, and has in a similar manner deceived all the hopes entertained of his future excellence: in these latter days he has sunk to the wretched level of the common herd of dramatists.

He is, nevertheless, the author of several dramas, that have received unequivocal proofs of public favor and admiration. Of these, his *Antony* has unfortunately been the most successful, as it is also the most immoral. *Christine* contains many striking beauties, and *Therèse* is a highly pathetic piece. *Angèle* also is a clever but exaggerated composition, with one of those incomprehensible German characters in it. M. Dumas is notorious for the freedom with which he has poached in German preserves; but the talent he displays in dressing up his spoils, combined with his undoubted originality and genius, has silenced the clamors of the critics. We blush to record, in conclusion, that so highly gifted a person as M. Dumas is the author of those contemptible and extravagant productions known under the titles of *Kean*, *Don Juan de Marana*, and *Caligula*.

The author of *Cinq-Mars*, M. Alfred de Vigny, has also had

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great influence on the new dramatic school, by his play of *Maréchale d'Ancre*, taken from the same period of history as *Cinq-Mars*. It appeared in 1831, when the rage for innovation was in full vigor. M. de Vigny adopts in his dramas a prose diction of great simplicity, as best fitted for the rough vigor of dialogue at which he aims. This is quite opposed to M. Victor Hugo's manner. The latter writes in verse, because its compression and musical flow assist the effect of that antithetical style, which he seems to consider essential to dramatic point. M. de Vigny is cautious, consistent, and natural, as well in his delineations as in his language; whereas Victor Hugo, amidst striking traits of character and powerful forms of expression, astounds occasionally by the most perverse deductions, unaccountable incongruities of sentiment, and strange, fantastic, yea, vulgar phrases.

The play of *Maréchale d'Ancre* refers to the commencement of the stormy reign of Louis XIII., the latter portion of which is exhibited in *Cinq-Mars*. Thus, M. de Vigny has given both extremities of that reign, the beginning and the end: Concini, Maréchal d'Ancre, opens, and Cinq-Mars closes the scene—each with a scaffold. In *Maréchale d'Ancre*, we behold the young monarch escaping from maternal authority, and erecting, as it were, a throne on the body of Concini; he seems to exult at the conviction, that at length he is really king; but we already perceive in the back-ground the stern and terrible form of Richelieu, advancing to grasp the sceptre from his feeble hands.

The philosophic idea of this drama is founded on the intoxication that usually follows sudden aggrandizement, and on the retribution awarded to criminal fortune. The royal favorite, Concini, exhibits all the arrogance, cupidity, and unbridled passion of an unworthy upstart, and his enemies at length prevail against him; he is killed, his body dragged through the streets by the mob, his wife burned, his palace reduced to ashes, and his youthful son cast forth an orphan and a beggar. M. de Vigny, however, not satisfied with the blackness of his hero's character, charges on him crimes of which he was guiltless: thus he makes him the instigator of Henri IV.'s assassination, in connection with Marie de Medicis; and, to add effect to his moral, he represents Concini struck dead near the stone from which Ravaillac sprang when he perpetrated that horrible deed. For this we hold the author liable to the severest censure, since it is an unpardonable offence thus gratuitously to load, with a crime he never committed, the memory of an historical personage, already sufficiently burdened with guilt. It is true, M. de Vigny has

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endeavored to prove, in some notes annexed to the play, that suspicions were entertained of Concini's participation in Henri's murder, but the authorities he quotes are far from substantiating the charge.

This drama of *Maréchale d'Ancre* partakes somewhat of the qualities of a novel. The action is too redundant and varied, insomuch that the attention is fatigued by the number and entanglements of the personages introduced: nor is there that lucid arrangement which enables the mind to thread its way through a multiplicity of facts and incidents, or to perceive their connection with the development of the main plot. Hence it happens, that the spectator or reader of *Maréchale d'Ancre* must be often puzzled to comprehend what was going on, so disjointed and overloaded is the movement of the play; and thus the effect of the piece as a whole, either on representation or perusal, is greatly impaired.

M. de Vigny's other plays are *Le More de Venise*, a well-executed and close translation of *Othello*, and *Chatterton*, founded on the same story as his novel *Stello*, with the characters more developed, the outline more filled up. However considerable the merits of these dramatic compositions, we think the narrative style more suitable than the dramatic to the peculiar talents of the Count de Vigny. His other works derive one of their greatest charms from the strong impress they bear of the author's own feelings and character, which materially enhances the animation and interest of the narrative. That sympathetic tendency is more especially conspicuous and attractive in his best work, *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires*, already noticed in the preceding chapter.

We shall be pardoned for omitting to notice any of those inferior dramatic compositions that so painfully illustrate the degraded condition of the French drama at the present time. We may state, however, that three popular novelists have attempted to reap laurels in this department of literature, who have gained little credit by their efforts, which have, indeed, only added to the number of unsuccessful and reprehensible productions: such are the *Cosima* of George Sand, *Vautrin* by M. de Balzac, and *Latréaumont* by M. Eugène Sue—all unworthy of their authors and of any stage. But although the actual state of the drama would thus appear to be so lamentable, we think indications of a beneficial reaction are perceptible, as we have already intimated; and this belief is founded both on the fact that any change must be for the better, and on the influence of those improved

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principles, touching dramatic art, which have been adopted, and which, owing to their recent introduction, have been hitherto misunderstood and perverted, but will in the end produce, it can scarcely be doubted, all the good effects that have resulted from them elsewhere.

Within these last two years, a young Jewess, Madlle. Rachel, who possesses, in high perfection, the art of declamation suited to the classical tragedy, has occasioned a partial revival of the old plays on the French stage. Through her extraordinary talent, a transient gleam of popularity has been thrown on the *Bajazet*, *Andromaque*, *Phèdre*, and *Mithridate*, of Racine, and on the *Tancrède* of Voltaire: but it is impossible for a single individual, however admirable her powers, to render these beautiful dramatic poems of the seventeenth century permanently acceptable. For a time, the public, attracted by the novelty of the attempt, and the graces of the actress, vouchsafed its applause; but modern feeling is clearly inimical to the classical style of drama, which never can be reproduced in France with any hope of success. It is altogether out of tune with the spirit of the age and country; and though a more excellent representative of tragedy than Madlle. Rachel has rarely appeared, yet her influence can be but slight and ephemeral. She may be regarded as a phenomenon of the day, but will make or leave no lasting impression in favor of the Aristotelian drama.

It is evident, from what we have observed on the subject, that the drama is at present the lowest department of French literature, and that, morally speaking, it is in a state of reprobation. Its decline we believe to be a consequence of its immorality. And this decline naturally produces increased public apathy, insomuch that the theatres, both in Paris and in the departments, are seldom well attended. An entire change in the tendency of the drama must take place, before any great amelioration can be expected. It is true that human crimes and passions have been at all times represented on the stage, but always under certain religious and moral sanctions, which render their delineation at once awful and instructive. But vice, in all its most hideous forms, is alone attempted to be depicted in the French drama, without any counteracting features to retrieve the character of the representation. Such a state of things cannot last; and now that Shakspeare is admitted as the greatest dramatic authority, there can be no question that, under his invigorating influence, the regeneration so devoutly wished is sure, although it may be slow.

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CHAPTER TENTH.

POETRY.

Modern School of French Poetry.—Multitude of Ordinary Poets, especially in the South of France—their Low Station.—Horace's Precept.—Object of Poetry.—Influence of Voltaire.—Delille.—Legouvé.—Chénédollé.—Millevoye.—De Fontanes.—André Chénier—his Tragical Death—Influence and Beauties of his Poems.—M. Alfred de Vigny—Character of his Poetry—his *Moïse*—his *Eloa*—his Lyrical Strains.—M. de Lamartine—his First Poems—his Subsequent Career and Political Life—his *Méditations Poétiques*—his *Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses*—*Jocelyn*—Subject and Character of that Poem—Tendencies of M. de Lamartine's Various Poems—Extraordinary Popularity of his Works—their Future Rank in Literature—Compared with Delille—M. de Lamartine's *Voyage en Orient*.—M. Victor Hugo—Instability of his Political Principles—Beneficial Tendency of his Poems—*Les Orientales*—Subject of those Poems—their Chief Beauty—*Les Feuilles d'Automne*—their Originality and Grandeur—The *Chants du Crépuscule*—The Poem entitled *La Cloche*—*Les Voix Intérieures*—*Les Rayons et les Ombres*.—De Béranger—Character of his Songs—their Tendency—their Rank in Literature—De Béranger's Retirement near Tours.—M. Casimir Delavigne's *Messéniennes*.—M. Sainte-Beuve.—M. Emile Deschamp.—M. Alfred de Musset.—Auguste Barbier—the *Iambes*.—M. Theophile Gauthier.—The *Academie Française* and Royal Institute of France.—Object of the Present Work.—Conclusion.

We have now reached that branch of French literature of which a foreigner can seldom become a competent judge—Poetry. The poetry of the classic school—the poetry of Racine and Voltaire—owing to its regular, fettered, although elegant style, is not characterized by the same lofty strains or fervid inspirations as that of the great modern poets. The muses of MM. Alfred de Vigny, Victor Hugo, De Lamartine, and Béranger, have taken a flight in regions that before them were unknown to French poetry; they soar above all that preceded them, wafted on the pure lyric breeze—and the lyric is the only true province of poetry, because it is the very mirror and echo of the human soul.

We have already intimated our conviction that the present age is not favorable to poetry. This may seem inconsistent with the flattering terms we use in reference to the modern poets, and altogether groundless if we add, that France is, perhaps, of all countries, the greatest fabricator of verses. But we must explain our meaning. Verse-making is practised undoubtedly to

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an unexampled extent among the youthful part of the French nation, and especially in the south. A baker at Nismes and a hairdresser at Agen, among others, have cultivated the art with considerable success. The baker, above all, who is called Reboul, has published many very elegant fragments, and proved himself one of the best imitators of M. de Lamartine's manner. The town of Toulouse, too, the Queen of the South, still retains the spirit of its ancient Troubadours; it is a city of poets and musicians. Notwithstanding all this, however, the pursuits that absorb the great majority of the nation are history, philosophy, politics, and industry. The verse-makers, as a class, belong to mediocrity, and their passion itself is but the ebullition of youthful fever; although it actuates so many in the spring of life, that the multitude of poetasters is innumerable. M. de Lamartine receives about a hundred poetical epistles every week. No doubt, many fine effusions of poetic genius might be found in the vast aggregate of poets and poems; but the prevailing taste being adverse, the public gives itself no concern, nor casts a single glance of inquiry and encouragement on any of them: they are all consigned to the same oblivion. It is owing solely to the surpassing excellence and capabilities of the six or seven great poets to whom France is indebted for the regeneration of its poetry, that they have at last been able to fix public attention, and to force, as it were, the admiration of their contemporaries. And yet it is doubtful, after all, whether they would have succeeded in gaining that applause, so richly deserved by their poetry, had they not already acquired great popularity and fame, either by their political principles or by their works as dramatists and novelists.

In regard to poetry, we would push to its full extent the severity of Horace's precept against mediocrity. We hold that nothing should be written in verse which is not super-excellent, and we shall therefore speak only of the higher portion of French poetry, and necessarily with great brevity; for our object in these dissertations has been to exhibit simply the spirit and tendencies of France in the nineteenth century, without overloading them with details, specimens, or extracts. In prose, anything may be said which is worth saying at all; in verse, only what is worth saying better than prose can say it. The elaborate and finished workmanship of poetry can only be worthily applied to the gems of fancy and thought; and of these that portion only whose effect is heightened by it. In our opinion, the origin and justification of all composition in verse spring from but two

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sources. In the first place, a thought or feeling requires verse for its adequate expression, so that it may flash on the mind with the rapidity and vividness of lightning; for the language of verse, with its inversions and elisions, is more condensed, its ideas and images can be pressed closer together, than is compatible with the rigid grammatical construction of prose. Secondly, it is an instinct of the human mind to give to thoughts an utterance impregnated with feelings. All sensitive emotions absorbing the whole frame tend to flow unobstructedly and equably, and seek instinctively a language that flows like themselves; hence man has ever tended to express all deep and sustained feelings in rhythmical language, and the deeper the feeling the more characteristic and decided the rhythm. On the other hand, we believe that the perfection of language, and the elasticity which can be imparted to prose, may offer another field to the expansiveness of feeling, and that poetical prose will finally obtain supremacy. Be this as it may, however, the rhythmic utterance seems to demand in preference short poems; for how can an intense feeling, expressed in metrical cadence, sustain itself very long at its highest elevation? Any bold attempts of the sort are rarely adventured in modern times; they have always failed hitherto in France, though it may perhaps be the fate of a future age to witness their success. But for our own part, we are clearly of opinion that such aspiring and prolonged efforts could be successful only in an era when the art of writing was unknown or forgotten, and versification was requisite as an indispensable aid to memory, or when animated by the supernatural genius of such master-spirits as Homer, Virgil, Dante, or Milton. Hence we conclude that in our epoch the suitable poetic form is either verse of a lyric, fragmentary nature, or poetic prose.

The influence of Voltaire, during the eighteenth century, banished from the realm of poetry the philosophy of passion as sung by Racine. In its stead he adopted the philosophy of reason, and proved its insufficiency as a poetic theme: for, however harmonious his versification, there is in all his poems a striking sterility of genuine melody and pathos. Admirable for the force of intellect they display, they rarely touch the heart or excite the sensibilities, being deficient alike in soul-stirring strains and in depth of feeling. In truth, Voltaire may be stated to have had no feeling: his insensibility to the beauty and sublimity of the Christian faith was but one result of a nature essentially cold and material. Addicted to view all things through a cynical medium, he attained, by the aid of an ever-lively imagination, to

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unrivalled perfection in wit and sarcasm, but never to a perception of the true elements of poetry, such as in our time have inspired several distinguished bards. He vainly endeavored to understand Shakspeare, but, unable to approach the heights of his genius, he denied its existence, and affected to despise as a barbarian the greatest of the moderns. *Spèrnimus quæ assequi non possumus.*

Delille held, after Voltaire, the poetic sceptre of France. He is always elegant and graceful, but devoid of that kindling warmth and animation which marks the presence of the true poetic fire. His translations of Virgil and Milton are overloaded with a mass of meretricious ornament, under which the originals are almost stifled. His best work, although in the same monotonous tone, is the poem entitled *L'Imagination.*

During the reign of Napoleon, and at the era of the Restoration, poetry remained in comparative neglect. A few timid muses only ventured to expand their modest wings, and take a limited flight, amidst the political convulsions of those days. Legouvé has left a poem, which is even now admired by many, *Le Mérite des Femmes.* Chénédollé's *Etudes Poétiques*, and Esmenard's poem *De la Navigation*, are estimable productions. But the great favorite, and by far the most poetic artist of that period was Millevoye, whose sensitive, chaste, and melancholy muse seems as the aurora of the resplendent orb illumining our epoch—M. de Lamartine. *La Chûte des Feuilles* of Millevoye is one of those gems most highly prized by the lovers of poetry. M. de Fontanes was also a great literary name at the commencement of this century; he was honored as *the* poet of the empire. His works, however, have sunk into oblivion, and are read by none. He translated Pope's *Essay on Man*, gave a poor imitation of Gray's celebrated elegy, and made a wretched attempt at an epic poem under the title of *Le Grèce Sauvée.* M. de Fontanes was recalled from exile by Bonaparte, and loaded with favors; yet he proved, like many others, ungrateful to his benefactor. It was he who drew up the decree of expulsion pronounced by the senate against the man at whose feet they all had crouched.

There is a poet whose career was cut short before the dawn of the present century, who may nevertheless be considered as belonging to this age by the influence he has exercised on contemporaries, and by the year in which his poems were first published. We mean André Chénier, whose works were only partially known until collected and given to the public in 1819.

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He was born at Constantinople, where his father held the post of consul-general, and was in Paris at the outbreak of the revolution, with his younger brother, Marie Joseph Chénier, whose critical work on French literature we have already mentioned. The latter became a zealous revolutionist, but not so André, who signalized his courage by openly reprobating the excesses of the revolutionary party. His ode on Charlotte Corday and his attacks on Robespierre marked him for a victim. He perished on the scaffold only two days before the reign of terror closed with the death of Robespierre. To the last moment, his brilliant and undaunted genius sounded the lyre in beautiful lyric lays. The ode commencing with these lines,

"Comme un dernier rayon, comme un dernier zephyre,
Anime la fin d'un beau jour,
Au pied de l'echafaud j'essaye encore ma lyre,
Peutêtre est-ce bientôt mon tour"—

[As the summer day pours its parting ray,
Or the breeze its farewell sigh,
At the scaffold's foot do I wake the lute,
As I wait my time to die]—

was begun a short time before his summons to death, and was interrupted by the arrival of the executioners: thus its close, murmured by the poet until his head fell, expired with him.

At the time of their appearance, his poems were hailed with admiration by all discerning critics, and were long regarded as models of composition, until somewhat thrown into the shade by the works of mere modern poets, whom they had greatly stimulated and influenced. There is no doubt that, had his life been spared, he would have become the great poet of the consulate and empire, and left many records of his fame behind him. When we analyze his merits as a poet, we find him, doubtless, an imitator; but his imitations are blended with so much original genius, that we at once accord him a high position on the French Parnassus. His originality is evinced in his artistic power, in his command of the resources of language, and in the perfect suavity of his melody, which yet remains unsurpassed. He was the first to modify the formal rigidity of the French metre. Much of the Greek inspiration is visible in his poetry; and in this respect it is more distinguished than for abundance and variety of ideas. His manner is altogether exquisite and inimitable. In imagery too, he is often lofty and magnificent; and his pictures of nature are singularly enchanting. That he was capable, also, of moralizing profoundly, is shown by the following beautiful lines, which afford a fair specimen of his peculiar gracefulness:—

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" Tout homme a ses douleurs ; mais aux yeux de ses frères
Chacun d'un front serein déguise ses misères.
Chacun ne plaint que soi—chacun dans son ennui
Envie un autre humain qui se plaint comme lui.
Nul des autres mortels ne mesure les peines,
Qu'ils savent tous cacher comme il cache les siennes ;
Et cachun, l'œil en pleurs, en son cœur douloureux,
Se dit : ' Excepté moi, tout le monde est heureux.'
—Ils sont tous malheureux. Leur prière importune
Crie et demande au Ciel de changer leur fortune.
Ils changent : et bientôt versant de nouveaux pleurs—
Ils trouvent qu'ils n'ont fait que changer de malheurs."

[All have their griefs ; though in their brethren's eyes
Men with calm front their miseries disguise.
Each inly plains ; and, in his weariness,
Envies his neighbor, rack'd by like distress.
None estimates the pains that others feel,
Since, as he veils his own, they theirs conceal.
With tear-fraught eye, each murmurs in his heart,
" The world is blest : I only stand apart."
—The world is blissless all. Each man to Heaven
Appeals with prayers, to change the fortune given.
The wish is granted : soon the fresh tears flow—
They find they have but made a change of woe.]

Following the course of modern poetry in France, we come now to speak of M. Alfred de Vigny in his poetical capacity. He has trodden in the steps of Millevoye and André Chénier, and materially aided the impulse given of late to the Gallic muse. He does not seem, however, to have been aware of the precedents that had gone before him, for he says, in the preface to his poems—" The only merit which has never been refused to these compositions, is that they have preceded all those of the same species in France, in which a philosophical thought is almost always expressed in an epic or a dramatic form. In this path of innovation the author has entered the first, it is true, but when yet very young." He is deceived, however, in imagining himself the first innovator ; but his merits as a poet are not at all affected by his having, in truth, only successfully followed in the wake of Millevoye and André Chénier.

The lyre of M. de Vigny always gives forth tones of infinite sweetness and melody, but in strains too invariable and monotonous. He excels in the delineation of refined feelings, but is deficient in that exuberance of fancy and force of expression, which so infallibly portray the powerful poetic mind. He is more distinguished by *esprit* and taste than by lofty inspirations. Thus his poetry bears the character rather of a graceful and sprightly narrative than of a high and impassioned effusion.

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That it exhibits on the part of the author much penetration into the springs of human action, is tinged with a soft and pleasing melancholy, and is always elegant and harmonious in versification, cannot be denied; yet these qualifications are not of themselves sufficient to stamp it as the emanation of a superior genius. Still, none can read it without gratification and delight, though it may fail to inspire any very rapturous sensations.

The poem in which M. de Vigny has shone to the greatest advantage, is perhaps his *Moïse*. The theme is not, as in *Stello*, the man of genius persecuted by the world, but, on the contrary, honored by it—the object of universal reverence, and yet unhappy. It is Moses, the appointed of God, crying to God, in anguish of spirit, for deliverance and rest: he implores that he may be relieved from the cares, anxieties, and weariness of heart that oppress him; that all gifts may be withdrawn from him; and that he may be suffered to sleep the sleep of common humanity. His cry is heard. When the clouds disperse which veiled the summit of the mountain from the Israelites waiting in prayer and prostration, Moses is no more seen: and now, "marching towards the Promised Land, Joshua advanced, pale and pensive of mien; for he was already the chosen of the Omnipotent."

But the longest of M. de Vigny's poems is *Eloa*, or the Sister of the Angels, a story of a bright being created from a tear of the Redeemer, and who falls, tempted by pity for the Spirit of Darkness. This beautiful conception is worked out with all the characteristic sweetness of the poet; at the same time, we cannot help regretting that this and most of his other poems are written in heroic verse, the most prosaic form of poetry, and entailing a structure from which monotony is almost inseparable. He has only produced a few lyrical stanzas, from among which we choose this pretty specimen:—

"Viens sur la mer, jeune fille,
Sois sans effroi;
Viens sans trésor sans famille,
Seule avec moi.
Mon bateau sur les eaux brille;
Vois ses mâts, vois
Ses pavillons et sa quille.
Ce n'est rien qu'une coquille;
Mais j'y suis roi.

Pour l'esclave on fit la terre,
O ma beauté!
Mais pour l'homme libre, austere,
L'immensité.
Les flots savent un mystère

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De volupté ;
Leur soupir involontaire
Veut dire : Amour solitaire
Et liberté !"

[Come and fear not, gentle one,
Come o'er the sea ;
Fortuitless and all alone,
Come thou with me.
See how gaily in the sun
My pennons fly
Over mast, and sail, and gun !
'Tis a shell—yet, peer'd by none,
King there am I.

Land was made but for the slave,
Fair love of mine !
But the free, the bright, the brave,
Theirs is the brine.
Mystic stores its waters have
Of joy and glee ;
Every murmur from its wave
Speaks of love, and chants a stave
Of liberty !]

In the year 1820, when the atmosphere was still and calm, a voice was suddenly heard singing, in plaintive accents, the sorrows of the heart, the delusiveness of all things earthly, and the yearnings of the soul towards a higher and purer life. It vibrated harmoniously on the public ear, for the theme of its laments was one of universal sympathy, and the music of its tones was solemn and ravishing, moving to countless emotions. This wondrous voice was that of Alphonse de Lamartine.

M. de Lamartine was born at Maçon, in October, 1791. His family, being ancient and distinguished, suffered greatly during the revolutionary excesses ; but he nevertheless received all the advantages of a good education. After residing for sometime in Lyons, he proceeded in 1813 to visit Italy, with Madame de Staël's *Corinne* in his hands. He has himself avowed the influence of her works on his mind. After the appearance of his *Méditations* in 1820, he immediately rose to eminence in the world of letters, of which he took advantage to secure a diplomatic appointment at Florence. In 1830, before the revolution of July, the government of Charles X. was on the point of sending him to the court of Greece as minister plenipotentiary. Shortly after the subversion of that government, he executed a journey to the Holy Land, during which he was elected a member of the Chamber of Deputies, and has continued to sit in that assembly till the present time. As a politician, he has forsaken

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his former friends the legitimists, and taken up a position almost peculiar to himself, standing in a great measure aloof from any of the great parties that divide the state. He nevertheless takes a prominent part in the political questions of the day, and often displays his oratorical powers to great advantage in the chamber. That he will ever achieve, however, a great political reputation, is much to be doubted: and in the meantime, he is injuring his poetical fame, as his last unfortunate production, *La Chûte d'un Ange*, has only too distinctly proved.

The first *Méditations Poétiques* of M. de Lamartine are the best and purest offspring of his poetic spirit; they combine the characteristics of greatness with the sweetness of lyric beauties. They appeared at a proper time, when all imaginations were prepared for this poetry of the soul. Goethe's *Werther*, Chateaubriand's *René*, and Madame de Staël, had already contributed to awaken psychological tendencies, and the *Méditations* harmonized admirably with the general inclination. The charm they possess does not arise so much from mere originality, because the ideas which animate them are eternal, as from the fervency and earnestness of feeling they evince, the lofty and hallowed sentiments they breathe, and the purity and exquisite gracefulness of their composition. They consist of detached pieces, upon subjects of an elevated or sentimental nature. Of these there are two, entitled *L'Immortalité* and *Dieu*, which seem to embody the thoughts of Bossuet in magnificent verse. Of others more distinctly elegiac, the most captivating are *Le Lac*, *Le Vallon*, *Le Golfe de Baïa*, and *Le Temple*. Through all this and other poetry of M. de Lamartine, the pervading feeling is intensely pious: everything in the face of nature, from the lowest to the highest object, from the fragile reed to the great orb of light, throws him into a religious ecstasy; and his sensations come so obviously from the heart, are so true and vivid, that they make a deep impression on every reader.

The second series of *Méditations Poétiques* is not considered equal to the first. There are many beautiful pieces amongst them, as, for instance, *Le Crucifix*, a splendid production; but they have never obtained the favor and celebrity of the former. The mind of the poet seems in them to have undergone some change; his spirit appears to have become more calmed and consoled; but the impression left on the reader after their perusal is somewhat vague and unsatisfactory. The subsequent efforts of M. de Lamartine, *La Mort de Socrate*, and the last canto of the Pilgrimage of Childe Harold, were even less suc-

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cessful. The latter, especially, in which he essays to continue and conclude Byron's great poem, has been pronounced a failure, as was to be expected from the glaring dissimilarity between the two poets in every essential particular: no comparison can be instituted between their respective works. M. de Lamartine's genius, however, took a new form and development, in a collection of poems published in 1830, and entitled *Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses.*

The *Harmonies* contain undoubtedly many verses of a loftier nature than any that had previously come from the poet's pen, but not one piece altogether as perfect as the best of the *Méditations;* they have, besides, all the defects of an ill-digested exuberance, without any traces of the practical life, or those illustrations of homely feelings, which abound in the first productions. The fact is, the admirers and friends of M. de Lamartine had persuaded him, by their exaggerated praises, that he had confined himself to too narrow a field, and their egregious flattery, operating on a naturally vain mind, induced him to ascend a step higher in his poetic flight. The consequence has been, that, whereas every reader, whatever his station, might recognize his own reveries, thoughts, and cravings, in those of the author of the *Méditations*, few are enabled to follow him in the *Harmonies*, where, in truth, the poet often loses himself.

Many of his early admirers were alienated by the publication of the *Harmonies.* Some regarded them as an inflated paraphrase of the *Méditations;* others condemned them as utterly unintelligible. The title itself seems to indicate the ambitious design of the poet, namely, to exhibit all the harmonies which connect the world with the Creator. Thus he incessantly wanders from the visible to the invisible. There is nothing in human, animal, or vegetable nature, which he does not link in secret harmony with the Deity, and derive directly from his providence. Often, ascending from thought to thought, he ventures to the very throne of the Omnipotent, and there his voice forgets all human sound; it becomes a mystical and inarticulate symphony of rapturous adoration, which may be felt by the soul, but surpasseth far the understanding. At length, exhausted by the fervor and tumult of his emotions, the poet sinks towards the earth, on which he falls with his pinions bruised and powerless.

But, if in the *Harmonies* M. de Lamartine soared to regions where he was almost lost to view, we discover in his subsequent work, *Jocelyn*, a return to ideas of a more earthly nature. *Joce-*

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lyn, is a long romance in verse. Although an undertaking somewhat hazardous in the present age, it has proved perfectly successful in the hands of M. de Lamartine, so far as popularity is concerned, for no poem has ever enjoyed a more extensive circulation. We are very far from calling in question the propriety of the verdict pronounced by the public in this instance; on the contrary, we regard the production as one of extraordinary merit and power, but it is nevertheless amenable to many serious charges both as to language and execution. The Alexandrine verse in which it is written seems to require a certain license of construction, permitting occasional and partial deviations from the strict rules of grammar; but M. de Lamartine has proceeded to unwarrantable lengths in this respect, and disregarded the laws of syntax with so little reserve as really to excite indignation. The descriptions, moreover, as is usual with this author, are drawn into the most fatiguing detail, and filled with exaggerations which materially impair their effect. Still, with these defects, the poem possesses undoubted claims to admiration, whether we consider the interest of the tale on which it is founded, or the incomparable beauties of manifold passages. Nothing can exceed the force of certain parts, in which the struggles between love and duty are depicted; and nowhere has the sublimity of Alpine scenery been so grandly displayed. Nevertheless, as a whole, it certainly falls far short of what the words of the poet in his preface would leave us to expect. He says, with reference to this work: "I considered what epic subject was appropriate to the age, to manners, to the future, which might allow the poet to combine the wonderful and the true, immensity and unity. This subject at once presented itself, for there are not two: it is humanity, the destiny of man, the phases the human mind must pass through to reach its accomplishment through God. Poetry is becoming again sacred by truth, as it was formerly by fable; it is becoming religious through reason, and popular through humanity. The epic is no longer national or heroic: it is much more—it is *humanitary* (humanitaire)."

It is much more easy, however, to indulge in these vague generalities, than to exhibit them in practical operation. Thus we find that this epic subject, so pompously announced, this *epopée humanitaire*, which was to embrace all humanity, is on the contrary, singularly individual, having very little reference to mankind in general, except in the universality of the religious feeling which pervades it.

Jocelyn, the hero of the tale, had been destined for the priest-

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hood, in order that, by giving up his share of the family inheritance, his sister might be settled in life. The ferment of the French revolution closes all the seminaries of religious instruction, and disperses their inmates. Jocelyn, however, retreats to the mountains, where he selects a grotto, or cave, as his habitation. An exile and his son arrive there, and seek refuge from the soldiers of the revolutionary tribunals. The exile soon after dies, leaving his son to the protection of Jocelyn. Jocelyn continues to live with the orphan, till the end of two years, when, by chance, he discovers that his young friend, Laurence, is a beautiful girl of about seventeen years of age. He loves—but he is destined for a priest; he is, however, yet free, not having taken holy orders. At this time a proscribed bishop is condemned to death; he sends for Jocelyn and ordains him, to be enabled to receive the sacrament; Jocelyn yields, and then flies the presence of Laurence; he is afterwards appointed curé of a small Alpine village. But the memory of Laurence still haunts him. Private business calls him to Paris, where he recognizes in a church the simple youth Laurence changed into an elegant coquette. Jocelyn flies instantly from the capital, and returns to the Alps. Some years quietly pass. One day, however, Jocelyn is sent for to a sick lady, who, travelling on her road to Italy lies ill at a cottage hard by. He goes, and finds Laurence, who, disgusted with the world, has come back to their old retreat. She feels the approach of death, speaks to the priest of her love for one Jocelyn, and unknowingly confesses to her lover. Jocelyn discovers himself—she seizes his hand—raises it to her lips, and expires. The unhappy Jocelyn prepares the funeral, and blesses her remains; and, after many years had passed away, the parishioners of the Alpine village interred their pastor in the "Lady's Tomb."

Such is the subject of the poem, which, it will be inferred, although not possessing the lofty attributes apparently contemplated by the author, is one peculiarly suited to the genius of De Lamartine, and calculated to draw forth those bursts of pious and poetic enthusiasm for which his muse is so conspicuous. But, after all, it may be doubted whether this sort of domestic epic be altogether adapted to the French verse and language, however successfully M. de Lamartine may be deemed to have treated it. We all know how admirable are the efforts of Wordsworth and Crabbe in the same line; but we apprehend it is a kind of poetry not destined to flourish on the French soil. The lyric appears by far the fittest form, especially since Victor Hu-

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go has stamped it with so truly national a character. The language must receive a considerable infusion of strength, must attain a higher degree of perfection, ere it can be made available for the heroic metre, or sustain the weight of the epic grandeur. This opinion is powerfully corroborated by the *Divine Epopée* of M. Soumet, recently published. The name of this author has been previously mentioned as a dramatist. It cannot be denied that his poem is founded on a grand and magnificent idea, being no less a subject than the Redemption of Hell. The poet supposes that Jesus Christ, who has purchased with his blood the redemption of the world, wishes—animated by a yet greater pity for greater crimes—to renew in hell his sacrifice upon earth; and he sends the Redeemer into the midst of the tortures of hell, to write another gospel with his blood. The passion of Jesus Christ is as immense in its results as that upon earth. By him those regions of despair are led to repentance; and, finally, Satan reascends near the throne of God, to wash away with his tears the traces of the sufferings undergone for his redemption. This is truly a wonderful conception, demanding for its development an extraordinary combination of qualities; but, without stopping to inquire whether M. Soumet has inherited the genius of Milton, it is certain he has made it more apparent that the French language is incapable of such an elevation as so sublime a theme indispensably requires.

To return to M. de Lamartine. The three great poetic productions we have spoken of, *Les Méditations*, *Les Harmonies*, and *Jocelyn*, embody his claims to the celebrity he enjoys. They have had the great advantage of appearing at the most propitious moment, precisely when the nation was prepared to receive and hail such productions. The first came at a time when that air of religious melancholy, which had settled over France during the Restoration, was not yet dispelled by the insanity which succeeded it; and nothing could be imagined a more perfect expression of that tendency than the *Méditations*. Their sighing, plaintive tones found a responsive echo in every breast. The second chimed in fortuitously with a passion for mysticism then prevailing very generally in France, just previous to the political and literary revolutions which soon after broke out. The third, *Jocelyn*, is likewise a felicitous adaptation to the spirit of the epoch; it exhibits the virtues and usefulness of the humble parish priest, lowest in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but first as a meritorious laborer in the Christian vineyard. *Jocelyn* has been considered by many as allegorical of a national bias towards a

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pure and simple Christianity, despoiled of pageantry, and nourished by the ministrations of meek, zealous, and affectionate pastors. But, although temporary causes may have had some influence in producing the general popularity of these poems, the fact that they are so much esteemed in France is one of a very gratifying nature; for it shows, despite pitiful allegations to the contrary, that an author needs not condescend to defile his pen with immorality to ensure success with the French public. Nothing can surpass in chasteness, delicacy, and morality, the poetical works of De Lamartine. And it is this quality, we hold, which, more than any other, has caused their eager reception in every circle—has rendered them the familiar favorites of every domestic hearth.

And whilst on the subject of M. de Lamartine's popularity—which, for the causes we have mentioned, and for other great merits of composition, we think the just recompence of his poems—we may add, that for a season it attained a preposterous height. Every form of incense that flattery could devise was offered to this poet of melancholy. With the fair sex admiration rose to idolatry; he was compared, in the ecstasy of delirium, to an angel and a prophet. Even sober critics caught the infection, and lavished on him hyperbolical commendations. The word genius was considered insufficient to characterize such an intellect as that of M. de Lamartine; philology was ransacked for terms that might adequately express the superhuman powers of the universal idol. It is to be confessed that the object of this adulation was not proof against its intoxicating effects. It has engendered within him an inordinate self-esteem, which is painfully conspicuous, not only in his writings but in his demeanor. Still, a ray of amiability and benevolence always plays around his pen and his countenance, rendering more tolerable that devout self-worship in which he is enwrapped. But the period of supreme glory has almost elapsed for M. de Lamartine. Comparatively few now recognize him as a divinity. The illusion began to subside when, in an evil hour, he was advised to forsake the part of a poet for that of an orator. The expectations of his more fervent votaries were high, his own were higher, as to the decisive influence he was to exercise over the counsels and destinies of the nation; but the evidence he has furnished of his incompetence ever to become a practical and efficient statesman has been so glaring, that the halo which of yore encircled him has faded and dissolved.

In this we refer, of course, to the exaggerated regard in which

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he has been held. But, soberly speaking, how much of that legitimate fame accorded to M. de Lamartine will survive the age? The question is one difficult to answer. But upon as candid and comparative an estimate as it is possible for us to form, we are of opinion that, with the exception of certain fragments from his poems, which will always be preserved as perfect models of French poetry, his works as a whole will not outlive the second generation. This conclusion is accredited by the anomalous fate usually meted out to writers, and especially to poets. For whereas the man of true genius is often overlooked by his contemporaries, and is appreciated only by posterity, so, on the other hand, an author who is deficient in the essential qualities of greatness, will often, from certain peculiarities or even eccentricities, and from evanescent circumstances, enjoy a boundless popularity in his own time, and yet be consigned by the inflexible justice of a subsequent age to everlasting oblivion. How many instances might we not quote of the truth of this! The annals of every literature teem with them. But to take a case, typical, we think, of De Lamartine's present and future condition, we may adduce the precedent of Delille, than whom no man was ever more idolized in his lifetime, but who has already sunk into almost complete neglect. The parallel will not be altogether perfect, perhaps, since the fame of De Lamartine will be at least perpetuated by editors of future French Analecta (minora or majora).

We should not be justified in dismissing M. de Lamartine, without passing a few words of notice on his *Voyage en Orient*, or, as it has been sometimes styled, his *Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*. We are relieved, however, from the necessity of dilating upon it, inasmuch as it has been rendered familiar to the British public by more than one translation, and consequently the leading characteristics of the work must be well known on this side the channel. According to the preface with which the author ushered it into the world, we are to regard it as a loose collection of notes, negligently penned amidst the incessant toils and dangers of Asiatic wayfaring, and intended for no higher purpose than to awaken reminiscences in his mind when once more safe within the bosom of his family. But whether the publication was owing to the entreaties of friends or to a predetermined design, it must strike every one who peruses it as an elaborate and highly finished piece of workmanship. It is essentially the production of a poetic mind, deeply imbued with religious impressions, and with an almost morbid melancholy. It is distin-

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guished less for the insight it gives into the manners and customs, the state and prospects, of the interesting countries visited, than for beautiful descriptions of scenery, and for pious, sentimental, and philosophical reflections. A mournful and affecting interest is thrown over the work by the death of M. de Lamartine's daughter, who had accompanied her father on the expedition, and met an untimely grave in the neighborhood of Beyrout. The author has lamented his loss in some exquisite and touching verses which are inserted in the book, and in which he has depicted all the sorrows natural to a bereaved parent under so fatal a dispensation, but who is sustained in his affliction by the consolations of religion. There are other pieces of poetry interspersed through the work, of which the best by far is the "Adieu to Marseilles." Certain political disquisitions in which the author indulges at the close of his travels are singularly unfortunate. They display an innate incapacity for such topics, of which none is unaware save the distinguished poet himself. In truth, the very qualities that constitute him a poet disqualify him for a politician. But setting aside these reveries, and some explosions of personal and national egotism, the *Voyage en Orient* will always be esteemed by thoughtful and refined minds.

One brief specimen of the tender, imaginative, and dreamy style of his poetry may be given in a translated form. It is an *Ode to the Nightingale*, and certainly possesses much beauty:—

What time thy heavenly voice preludes
  Unto the fair and silent night,
Wing'd minstrel of my solitudes,
  Unknown to thee I trace its flight.

Thou knowest not that one remains
  Beneath the trees, hour after hour,
Whose ear drinks in thy wondrous strains,
  Intoxicated by their power;

Nor that the while a breath of air
  Escapes but from my lips with grief;
And that my foot avoids with care
  The rustling of a single leaf;

Thou deemest not that one, whose art
  Is like thine own, but known to day,
Repeats and envies in his heart
  Thy forest-born nocturnal lay!

If but the star of night reclines
  Upon the hills thy song to hear,
Amid the branches of the pines
  Thou couchest from the ray in fear.

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Or if the rivulet, which chides
The stone that in its way doth come,
Should speak from 'neath its mossy sides,
The sound affrights and strikes thee dumb.

Thy voice, so touching and sublime,
Is far too pure for this gross earth:
Surely we well may deem the chime
An instinct which with God has birth!

Thy warblings and thy murmurs sweet
Into melodious union bring
All fair sounds that in nature meet,
Or float from heaven on wandering wing.

Thy voice, though thou may'st know it not,
Is but the voice of the blue sky—
Of forest glade, and sounding grot,
And vale where sleeping shadows lie:

It blends the tones which it receives
From prattlings of the summer rills,
From trembling rustlings of the leaves,
From echoes dying on the hills;

From waters filtering drop by drop
Down naked crag to basin cool,
And sounding ever, without stop,
While wrinkling all the rock-arch'd pool;

From the rich breeze-born plaints that flow
From out the branchy night of trees;
From whispering reeds and waves that go
To die upon the shores of seas;—

Of these sweet voices, which contain
The instinct that instructeth thee,
God made, O nightingale, the strain
Thou givest unto night and me!

Ah! these so soft nocturnal scenes,
These pious mysteries of the eve,
And these fair flowers, of which each leans
Above its urn, and seems to grieve;

These leaves on which the dew-tears lie,
These freshest breathings of the trees—
All things, O Nature, loudly cry,
"A voice must be for sweets like these!"

And that mysterious voice—that sound,
Which angels listen to with me,
That sigh of pious night—is found
In thee, melodious bird, in thee!

The name of Victor Hugo has been already introduced to the reader as a novelist and dramatist: we have now to speak of him as a poet. How early in life he began his poetical career, has

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been heretofore incidentally mentioned. He emerged as a political songster of the ultra-royalist school, and published some odes, which, however beautiful as poetical compositions, can be relished only by those few royalists of former days who have preserved all the passions of 1815. M. Victor Hugo has, however, like many of his contemporaries, evinced a singular versatility in political opinions, and his muse has always been the ready instrument of his political caprices. Until and for some time after the Revolution of July, 1830, he remained a stanch advocate of legitimacy; subsequently he enlisted in the ranks of the Napoleonists, and seems of late to have hoisted the standard of republicanism. His poems accordingly vary greatly in the spirit they breathe, of which signal proof is afforded in the odes he has written on Napoleon at different periods. Thus, in one of the first he composed, he reviles the emperor in virulent strains: after alluding to his banishment to Elba as the fit reward of crimes, he delivers himself of the following verses with reference to his exile and death at St. Helena: —

" Il tomba roi ; puis dans sa route
Il voulut, fantôme ennemi,
Se relever, afin sans doute
De ne plus tonber à demi.
Alors loin de sa tyrannie,
Pour qu'une effrayante harmonie
Frappat l'orgueil anéanti,
On jeta ce captif suprême
Sur un rocher, débris lui-même
De quelque ancien monde englouti.

Là se refroidissant comme un torrent de lave,
Gardé par ses vaincus, chassé de l'univers,
Ce reste d'un tyran, en s'eveillant esclave,
N'avait fait que changer de fers.
Tous ses pas dans son île ébranlaient nos murailles !
Exilé des champs de bataille,
Il se survivait tout entier !
Il mourut. Quand ce brult accourut vers nos villes,
Le monde respira dans ses fureurs civiles,
Délivré de son prisonnier !

Ainsi orgueil s'égare en sa marche éclatante,
Colosse né d'un souffle et qu'un regard abat.
Il fit du glaive un sceptre, et du trône une tente.
Tout son regne fut un combat.
Du fleau qu'il portait lui-même tributaire—
Il tremblait, prince de la terre.
Soldat on vantait sa valeur :
Retombé dans son cœur comme dans un abime,
Il passa par la gloire, il passa par le crime,
Et n'est arrivé qu'au malheur !"

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[He fell a king: then, in his route,
A hostile phantom up he rose,
Trusting no more, we scarce may doubt,
To fall so low beneath his foes.
Afar then from his tyrant-throne—
That an appalling unison
Might press upon his humbled pride—
This mightiest captive on a rock
Was cast—a rock, itself descried
As the great ruin of some earthquake shock.

Congealing there like a vast lava-stream,
Guarded by conquer'd foes, from man thus bay'd,
This tyrant-relic, wakening from his dream
A slave, a change of fetters had but made.
Each step upon his island shook our walls;
Though rung no more his battle-calls,
He yet in all survived;
He died; and, when the tidings met its ears,
The world respired amid its civil fears,
Of its great prisoner deprived.

Thus strayeth pride, on its high progress bent,
A breath-born giant, which a look may smite.
A spear the sceptre, and the throne a tent
He made. His reign was one long fight.
He to the scourge he wielded look'd with fear—
He trembled, though the lord of earth.
They praised him for a soldier's worth:
Fallen back upon his own heart's deep abyss,
He pass'd from glory and from crime wide-spread;
The end of all was wretchedness!]

But if we search his poems entitled *Les Feuilles d'Automne*, we find lyric pieces called *Souvenirs d'Enfance*, *Odes à la Colonne*, in which he extols Napoleon as warmly as he had previously vituperated him. In the first he says of him—

"Pour voir cette figure illustre et solennelle,
Je m'étais echappé de l'aile maternelle,
Car il tenait déja mon esprit inquiêt;"

[To see that solemn and illustrious form,
I left the shade of the maternal wing,
For he even then had stirr'd my soul with awe;]

and then characterizes him as *l'Empereur, cet envoyé de Dieu* (the Emperor, that messenger from God). Afterwards he remarks—

"Plus tard, une autre fois, je vis passer cet homme,
Plus grand dans son Paris que César dans Rome.
* * * * * *
Par mille cris de joie et d'amour furieux,
Le peuple saluait ce passant glorieux."

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[Again, more late, I saw that man pass by,
More great in France than Cæsar in his Rome.
* * * * * *
With thousand cries of joy and frenzied love,
The people cheer'd that glorious passer-by.]

In the second, the poet's admiration becomes almost idolatrous; and the same feeling is manifested even more strongly in his late ode on Napoleon's funeral. It is, of course, allowable for a man to change his opinions concerning individuals or events; but these extracts are so diametrically opposite in tone and spirit, that we are tempted to regard Victor Hugo's political sympathies as resting upon either a crazy or an immoral foundation. We can very easily understand that, when burning with royalist zeal, he might have viewed the dreaded opponent of the Bourbons as an incarnate fiend; but we confess it seems unaccountable that this strenuous upholder of the "divine right" should describe Napoleon as "the envoy of God." The phenomenon savors greatly of the unprincipled policy attributed, how justly we know not, to the royalists, of affecting republicanism or Napoleonism, which, strangely enough, are considered identical, in order to provoke a fresh convulsion in France, under favor of which the exiled branch may possibly be restored. Be this as it may, we think it is to be regretted that so highly gifted a poet as Victor Hugo should have sullied his muse at all with the defilement of political passions, and we therefore turn with pleasure to view him in nobler exercises.

M. Victor Hugo evinced in his *Orientales* a great poetical progress. This collection of poems displays with lustre his lyrical powers. It bears striking traces of labor. Each stanza has undoubtedly been subjected to long and careful revision. These poems resulted from a sudden whim of the poet, as he relates in the preface—from a fantasy which flashed and wrought upon his imagination one evening, as he was contemplating a magnificent sunset. The poet had seen Spain during his childhood, and reverie led him to revisit its scenes. He thought of the Moors, and a poetic vision came across him of Moorish manners, warriors, and sultans, which he hastened to commit to verse, and thus originated *Les Orientales*.

They whom the title of the work may lead to expect illustrations of the East, as generally understood, namely, the regions of Asia, will be surprised to find, that the East of M. Victor Hugo is confined to Spain and a part of European Turkey. Therefore, although the designation of *Les Occidentales* might have been more appropriate, we have descriptions of countries in which the

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author dwelt, and not of such as he had never seen. This we hold to be an advantage, notwithstanding the opinion of Mr. Moore to the contrary; for the distinguished author of *Lalla Rookh* is reported to have maintained against lord Byron, that it was by no means necessary for a poet to visit a country in order to describe it. In the judgment of many, his own poems have tended to prove the reverse of the proposition. And it certainly seems improbable, that by the force of imagination alone, faithful or even verisimilar portraitures can be forged of climes and peoples, known only through the relations of others. He alone who has trod the soil, and breathed the air of a foreign land, can pretend to understand it; there is in the very aspect of localities a whole revelation of manners, feelings, and ideas.

The *Orientales* removed an impression unfavorable to Victor Hugo's powers. He had been hitherto deemed fitted only to paint the external world; it was now seen that his muse could soar or dive into elevations and depths of great sublimity and pathos. His versification, moreover, attracted notice as well for its beauty as its novelty, which latter quality provoked attacks from certain quarters, and occasioned a controversy that ended in the complete triumph of the author and his new style. *Les Orientales* are, as we have said, a collection of poems, and they evince great versatility of poetic talent in the various pieces. That entitled *Le Feu du Ciel*, is grave and awful in character, full of the dark imagery of the Prophets; *Le Vœu* and *Les Adieux de l'Hôtesse Arabe* are sweet and graceful compositions; whilst a deep impressive melancholy pervades the *Fantômes*, the best piece of the volume.

But the pageantries of war and luxury are chiefly sung in the *Orientales*, from which dazzling themes the author made a wide divergence in a subsequent volume of poems published by him, under the title of *Feuilles d'Automne*. In these, his strains are pure and simple; his feelings calm, tender, and domestic; chastened in expression, whether their tone be grave or gay. They are principally of a religious tendency, diversified with the glowing spontaneous effusions of youthful hopes, reminiscences, and affections. The innocence and loveliness of childhood, too, are delightfully portrayed. Hear the artless words of the boy beseeching his grandmother to interpret the Bible:

> "On montre nous la Bible, et les belles images—
> Le ciel d'or, les saints bleus, les saintes à genoux,
> L'Enfant Jesus, la crèche, et le bœuf, et les Mages;
> Fais nous lire du doigt dans le milieu des pages,
> Un peu de ce latin qui parle à Dieu de nous."

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[Show us the Bible, with its beauteous shapes—
The golden sky, blue saints, and kneeling nuns,
Young Christ, the Magi, with the cow and ox;
Our little fingers guiding o'er its leaves,
Make us read words that speak to God of us.]

Again, no one can read the following lines without emotion—without having awakened in his mind a recollection of sensations he has often experienced and struggled with:—

"Rêver, c'est le bonheur; attendre, c'est la vie.
Courses, pays lointains, voyages, folle envie!
C'est assez d'accomplir le voyage eternel.
Tout chemine ici bas vers un but de mystère.
Où va l'esprit dans l'homme? où va l'homme sur la terre?
Seigneur, Seigneur, où va la terre dans le ciel?
Que faire et que penser? Nier, douter, ou croire?
Carrefour tenébreux! triple route! nuit noire!
Le plus sage s'assied sous l'arbre du chemin,
Disant tout bas: 'J'irai, Seigneur, où tu m'envoies.'
Il espère, et de loin, dans les trois sombres voies,
Il écoute, pensif, marcher le genre humain."

[To dream is happiness; suspense is life.
Shiftings and journeyings—vain ambitions all!
The eternal voyage is enough for man.
All tends below to one mysterious goal.
Man's soul! oh, whither flies it? whither man?
Lord, Lord, what is the hap of earth in heaven?
What must we do—what think? Trust? doubt? deny?
Dark labyrinth! route triple-pathed! black night!
The wisest sits beneath some wayside tree,
And whispers, 'Whither, Lord, thou wilt, I go,'
He hopes, and in the three gloom-shrouded ways,
Man's onward march he pensive hears from far.]

Amongst the admirable pieces that compose the *Feuilles d'Automne*, it is difficult to select those entitled to especial commendation. But one addressed "To a Traveller," and another headed "What is felt on a Mountain," are certainly inimitable compositions. Likewise, the three poems on childhood. This subject is always a source of delightful inspiration to the poet; he gathers flowers of ineffable fragrance round a cradle, and finds a voluptuous endearment in the sweet and uncertain glance of infancy. Lastly, *La Prière pour Tous* is worthy to be contrasted with Pope's Universal Prayer; it is more simple and touching in idea, since it presents a father teaching his little daughter to lisp supplications to the Almighty.

The muse of Victor Hugo seemed to have reached its highest perfection in the *Feuilles d'Automne;* it signally declined in his subsequent production, *Les Chants du Crépuscule.* Yet the poems

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published under this title are upon lofty subjects; they sing the emotions that assail us in the twilight of life, when the hope of earthly happiness is extinguished, and the soul is absorbed in fearful contemplations of the impending change. But the effect of the many beauties which stud them is altogether marred by allegorical extravagances, grotesque similes and comparisons, and flagrant inaccuracies of language. At the same time, they contain pieces in every way worthy of the author of *Feuilles d'Automne:* as, for instance, that entitled *Espoir en Dieu;* another beginning by *De nos jours—plaignez nous;* an admirable composition called *Date Lilia;* and a fine philosophic poem entitled *La Cloche*, which is the chef-d'œuvre of the book.

It would be erroneous to imagine that these collections of poems are loose and desultory pieces, thrown at random into a volume; each, on the contrary, has a special object, and represents a particular idea. *Les Voix Intérieures* which followed the preceding, are a séries of poems devoted to the praise and illustration of family affections. But, unhappily, the same judgment must be passed on them as on the *Chants du Crépuscule.* Amidst numerous faulty and irregular compositions, marked by wild eccentricities, only a few gleam as bright and lustrous gems, of which two merit unqualified eulogy—*Les Oiseaux Envolés*, and the magnificent effusion, *Dieu est toujours là.* Upon the appearance of this volume, the warmest admirers of Victor Hugo stood mute with sorrow and chagrin. His poetic vein seemed exhausted, and France began to deplore the premature decline of her most brilliant poetic star. This proved, however, to be too hasty an impression, as the poet abundantly demonstrated by his after publication of *Les Rayons et les Ombres*, in which he seems to have surpassed all his former efforts. As a whole, it is undoubtedly to be considered his most faultless production; since with only two exceptions, every piece it contains beams with intelligence and genius. At the same time, no single philosophic idea is paramount in it, as in the others that preceded. A powerful and enthusiastic Christian feeling is blended, apparently, with pantheistical tendencies. There is, however, infinite sweetness, pathos, and harmony, in all those poems; and we confess our inability to particularize such as excel in majesty and loveliness. We might quote passages breathing the purest and most sublime sentiments from every page; but we forbear, trusting that any one anxious to investigate the merits of Victor Hugo as a poet, will not omit to consult his *Les Rayons et les Ombres.*

Next in the race of poets we find M. de Béranger, the political

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influence of whose songs has been heretofore alluded to. The fame of Béranger has spread into all lands as the first *chansonnier* of his age. In France, from the patriotic fervor that animates his verse, he has long been a popular idol; but it is upon other grounds that judicious critics, French and European, have bestowed on him such favor and applause. His eminent qualities as a poet, independently of the adventitious aid derived from the attractive nature of his themes, have alone sufficed to ensure him universal admiration; and, in his own country, where the force of allusions, the spirit of expressions, the warmth of sentiments, could alone be thoroughly felt and understood, he has been regarded with mingled love, veneration, and esteem.

It was not until the close of the year 1815, that Béranger drew the notice of the public towards him by the publication of a volume of songs, which immediately obtained an extensive popularity. Most of the compositions it contained were of a political tendency, either extolling the glories and achievements of the dethroned emperor, or lamenting the degradation of France under the restored Bourbons. Nothing could be more suitable to the national feeling at the moment. They were hailed with rapturous applause, and re-echoed from one extremity of the land to the other. That the government refrained from suppressing this publication, or chastising its audacious author, was not owing to any want of inclination, but rather to a consciousness of its own instability. Thus encouraged by the approbation of his countrymen, Béranger gave freer scope to his patriotic muse, and produced a succession of songs or odes, which, as the subject grew graver, and the language higher and bolder, operated with increased intensity on the public mind. In 1820, the liberal party, to testify its gratitude to so influential a champion, and at the same time to exhibit the strength and zeal of the anti-royalist array, resolved to promote a subscription for the advantage of the poet. Ten thousand names were collected for a republication of the volume of 1815, with the addition of a second volume of songs composed in the interval. The government, seeing in this something of a party movement, commenced a prosecution against the poet and his printer. The result was, the conviction of De Béranger for a libel, and a sentence of imprisonment for twelve months. But this only occasioned a reiteration of the annoyance in another shape. Under pretence of giving a report of the trial, the whole of the condemned songs, which could not be otherwise republished, were inserted at full length as part of the proceedings; and this report, printed in the same shape and type,

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became the supplement of Béranger's other verses. This republication formed the subject of another prosecution, in which the government was defeated: the songs thus obtained an authorized circulation throughout France, and Béranger became the idol of the people.

When Charles X. committed his last folly, Béranger assisted in his dethronement, by an active participation in the secret counsels of the liberal party. From the revolution, however, which owed him so much, he has accepted nothing. He has seen his friends, his pupils, his colleagues in opposition, become ministers, but has declined to share the favors of the new government. Content with a very moderate income, his life is in harmony with the independence of his muse. Soon after the revolution he published two songs in favor of the Poles; another to his *Amis devenus Ministres;* and a lyrical invitation to M. de Chateaubriand to return to his native country, upon which his talents and the courage of his political conduct had reflected such honor. The ode is a most graceful composition: it begins thus—

"Chateaubriand, pourquoi fuir ta patrie,
Fuir son amour, notre encens et nos soins?
N'entends tu pas la France, qui s'écrie,
'Mon beau ciel pleure une étoile de moins?'"

[Why from thy land, Chateaubriand, dost thou fly—
Fly from her loving cares and ours afar?
Dost thou not hear thy country sadly cry,
'My bright sky weeps for one departed star?']

It afterwards gives a sketch of M. de Chateaubriand's life and works; and thus alludes to his constitutional efforts under the Restoration:—

"Des anciens rois quand revint la famille,
Lui, de leur sceptre appui religieux,
Crut aux Bourbons fair adopter pour fille
La liberté qui se passe d'ayeux."

[When the old kings whom he so warmly propp'd,
Returned once more to hold their ancient reign,
He deem'd that he could make the race adopt
That liberty which holds such favor vain.]

The first verse forms the *refrain*, and is repeated at the end of each stanza. It is probable that this flattering tribute to M. de Chateaubriand was inspired by an encomium passed by the latter, in the preface to his *Etudes Historiques*, on a stanza of Béranger, which he describes as "worthy of Tacitus, who also composed verses." The following is the celebrated stanza in

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question, and it occurs in the song called *Le Dieu des bonnes Gens.* It is an allusion to Napoleon:—

"Un conquérant, dans sa fortune altière,
Se fit un jeu des sceptres et des lois;
Et de ses pieds on peut voire la poussière
Empreinte encor sur le bandeau des rois."

[A conqueror, in his high and proud career,
Made sport of sceptres, laws, and antique things;
And still we see his footstep's dust appear
A stain upon the diadems of kings.]

It is a bacchanalian song in which this fine verse appears; and every stanza, although equally energetic in expression, concludes with the convivial chorus of—

"Le verre en main, gaiement je me confie
Au dieu des bonnes gens."

[Glass in hand, I gaily trust
In the god of jovial souls.]

The generous regret expressed by Béranger for the misfortunes of M. de Chateaubriand, called forth a reply from the latter, as honorable to his character as the verses mentioned were to that of his brother poet but political adversary. "Pierre de Béranger," says M. de Chateaubriand, "is pleased to call himself a *song-writer;* but like Jean de Lafontaine, who chose to name himself a *fabulist*, he has taken rank among our popular immortalities. I predict to you, sir, that your repute, great as it already is, will yet increase. Few critics in this day are capable of appreciating the perfect finish of your verses—few ears are delicate enough to taste their full harmony. The most exquisite art lies there hid under the garb of nature and ease."

In the year 1833, Béranger published his last songs, entitled *Chansons Nouvelles et Dernières.* They bear no signs of decline in the poet's genius, but, on the contrary, are distinguished for the same high qualities that have ever marked his productions. They are, as usual, chiefly of a political nature, impressed, however, with a strong philanthropic spirit, and a tone of heartfelt melancholy, which is signally conspicuous in a most affecting piece entitled *Le Vieux Vagabond.*

Béranger now lives at Tours: he is not a very old man, and is understood to be employing his yet unimpaired faculties in writing a history of the stirring scenes amidst which he has passed his life. His annals cannot fail to possess a lively and powerful interest. Let us hope that, after having consoled his country for the loss of past glory, his potential voice will call it to feelings

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of a more noble and exalted nature, and thereby increase his claims to the renown and veneration which attend him in his retreat on the banks of the Loire.

At the era of the Restoration, another poet aspired to share with Béranger the glory of consoling his country for its disasters and sorrows. M. Casimir Delavigne published his *Messéniennes* when the presence of foreign armies was yet humbling French pride, inflamed by so long a course of brilliant conquest. He sang with vigor and pathos the victories and misfortunes of France, giving to his poems an elegiac form, and styling them *Messéniennes*. "I have borrowed this title of Barthélemi," said the poet, "to characterize a species of national poetry which no one has yet endeavored to introduce in our literature." And he adopted, in truth, the elegiac form, often selected by the ancients to commemorate national reverses and calamities. It was thus, according to Barthélemi's *Voyage d'Anacharsis*, that Tyrtæus in his Elegies had described the wars between the Lacedemonians and the Messenians, and Callinus those which in his time afflicted Ionia. These poems met with great popularity at the time they appeared. They were repeated at all the patriotic meetings, and their exaggeration well suited the momentary effervescence and excited feelings of the nation; but their influence vanished with the emotions that gave them birth. Many of the *Messéniennes*, however, are remarkable for their rich coloring, splendid imagery, energy of thought, and metrical harmony. Three especially rise above the others by their beauty; they are *Waterloo*, *Parthenope*, and *Napoléon*.

We have spoken of those whom France regards as the regenerators of her poetry. Each of them has a host of imitators, and many successful ones: others gifted with eminent poetic qualities remain unnoticed, either because they are eclipsed by the brighter luminaries, or because the few lovers of poetry, satisfied with the great masters of the day, are indifferent to the claims of new aspirants. Thus, many ingenious poets are doomed to pine in obscurity, from the hardness of the fate that has assigned them to an era singularly unpropitious to poetical merit. However well disposed towards them, it is inconsistent with our purpose to discuss their several capacities and qualifications, because we have throughout deemed it expedient to notice in detail only such literary productions as have exercised an influence more or less important on the present age. At the same time, we may be permitted to mention a few of the principal secondary poets, and the subjects of their respective works. Many of them are ad-

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mired and cherished, even more than the greater names, in particular circles; for a poet, if he have any merit or originality, is sure to find some who will sympathize and take part with him, and sometimes the more warmly because of the neglect evinced by the public at large. Mediocrity, too, is oftentimes more highly relished than a dazzling superiority, especially by the sententious, the envious, and the stunted, who form a goodly portion of the community.

M. Sainte-Beuve, the distinguished critic, has produced a volume of good poetry, entitled *Les Consolations*. His other efforts are greatly inferior. *Les Consolations*, full of tender melancholy and delightful reveries, express the idea that friendship and religion are the two main sources of comfort under afflictions, and of occupation to the affections of the human heart. They are written with perfect good taste and elegance. M. Emile Deschamps is the author of sundry *romances* and boudoir poems, which have proved very acceptable in their sphere, though too strongly scented with exotic fragrance for robust temperaments. He has also published, under the title of *Etudes Françaises et Etrangères*, a collection of poetic fragments and imitations, which are occasionally sprightly and effective. His brother Antony has given some partial translations from Dante, unhappily executed; and he seems to have imitated the author of the *Inferno*, with a sad lack of appreciation nevertheless, in various parts of his principal work, called *Les Dernières Paroles*, which contains, however, a few good passages on Italy, insufficient, at the same time, to redeem the extravagance of the other portions. M. Alfred de Musset is an affected poet, whose productions are suited only to the atmosphere of drawing-rooms. His *Contes d'Espagne et d'Italie*, however, have their admirers, though characterized by many of the monstrous features of the romantic school.

M. Auguste Barbier is a poet who emerged into notice after the Revolution of 1830. His poems entitled *Iambes* exhibit a singular compound of democratical wildness, acute irony, and lofty dignity. They consist of fugitive pieces on France, Italy, and England, of various merit. Some verses on Shakspeare are very fine: the last stanza runs thus—

> "Ton génie est pareil au soleil radieux,
> Qui, toujours immobile au haut de l'empyrée,
> Verse tranquillement sa lumière sacrée
> Sur la folle rumeur des flots tumultueux."
>
> [Thy genius is like the radiant sun,
> Which, ever fix'd empyreal heights upon,

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Its sacred light deigns tranquilly to throw
On the wild tumults of the waves below.]

M. Barbier subsequently published his impressions of Italy in the *Pianto*. This work is distinguished by harmony of composition and energy of thought, without any of the roughness of the *Iambes;* the genial clime and voluptuous sun of Italy had softened the poet's passion and muse.

M. Theophile Gauthier has manifested considerable originality as a poet, but not much judgment in his subjects. His compositions, *La Comédie de la Mort* and *Fortunio*, bear proofs of no ordinary talent, lamentably misdirected. This writer is still young, and may in the maturity of age devote his faculties to better purposes. There are some excellent verses to be found in the volumes of poetry issued by MM. Bignan and Boulay Paty, whose works, especially those of the former, have often been crowned by the *Académie Française;* also, in the various poetical works of MM. Turquety, Brizeux, Duclésieux, Morvonnais, Autrau of Marseilles, etc. Among the female poets, Madlle. Amable Tastu holds the first rank; her poetical effusions are graceful, elegant, and replete with harmony and melancholy. After Madlle. Tastu, the most known are Mesdames Delphine Gay, Desborde Valmore, M lanie Waldor, Anaïs Segalas, etc.

In the course of these dissertations on the modern literature of France, we have often had occasion to mention some of the sections of the Institute, and it may be proper to add a few words of explanation as to its organization. The *Institut Royal de France*, generally called *l'Institut*, is a foundation that belongs to the nineteenth century; its first section only was founded by Cardinal Richelieu. The Institute is divided into five sections. The first is *L'Académie Française*, limited to forty members; the second *L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, limited also to forty, the departments whereof are antiquarian and classical learning, the oriental languages, and some branches of history. The third section is the *Académie des Sciences*, with seventy-four members, which is filled by men illustrious in mathematics, chemistry, and natural philosophy. The fourth is the *Académie des Beaux-Arts*, limited to fifty members, and filled by painters, sculptors, architects, musical composers, and engravers. The fifth is the *Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques*, with thirty-five members, distinguished by their works on philosophy, morals, legislation, political economy, and general history.

The *Académie Française* is the section of the Institute more

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especially literary, and after it the *Académie des Sciences Morales;* but to the first only belong, or ought to belong, those who have enriched the literature of the country by immortal productions: yet such is the power of intrigue and of party-spirit, that many men almost unknown in the republic of letters have been called by a majority of the academicians to take place in their ranks; besides which, some obscure writers yet alive were chosen at a period when, under the emperor, there was a great dearth of literary talent. There are other members of that body, also, who by the nature of their labors, are not entitled to sit in the *Académie Française*, but who have taken advantage of an exalted political position to gratify their ambition of belonging to the first and most celebrated section of the Institute. It cannot, at the same time, but excite astonishment and indignation to know that such men as De Béranger and De Lamennais do not belong to the *Académie Française* nor to the Institute. Victor Hugo had been four times a candidate, and been as many times rejected by the despicable jealousy of the wrecks of the classical school, and has only lately been elected by a majority of one voice. But to prove the hostility of the body, the last time he was rejected, when all the other candidates had withdrawn, in deference to the legitimacy of his claims, his enemies proposed a M. Flourens, a gentleman comparatively unknown, although distinguished in natural philosophy, and succeeded in carrying his election.

We have now brought our assigned task to a conclusion, in which, to the best of our ability, we have attempted to shadow forth the existing state of literature in France. The last department we have treated, Poetry, has been the most difficult, and is perhaps the most imperfect, because, from the nature of our plan, we were debarred from adducing those examples, illustrated by commentaries and parallels, which can alone convey an adequate idea of the characteristics and beauties of different poets. No general description, we are aware, can suffice for this purpose; but we still indulge the hope that our brief summary will serve to exhibit the nature of the poetry that chiefly prevails in France at the present moment. With regard to literature at large, it will be seen that France boasts numerous great names in all its departments; and that if some of them are in a deteriorated and unsatisfactory condition, the greater part are flourishing and expansive. And this holds true, it is consolatory to state, of the higher branches, which will cer-

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tainly bear comparison with the analogous departments of any literature in Europe. As to our own humble effort, we are conscious of the many defects with which unfriendly criticism may charge it, but we trust that the kindness and candor of the British public will be liberally extended towards a stranger, endeavoring in a foreign language to make it acquainted with the intellectual state of his country, so happily bound in bonds of amity and alliance with the British nation—long, he prays, to remain unbroken.

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NOTES.

Page 13. FICHTE.—M. de Vèricour having commenced his treatise by an allusion to Fichte's definition of literature, a word upon this philosopher may not be inappropriate. Johann Gottlieb Fichte was born on the 19th of May, 1762, and died, in his fifty-second year, on the 27th of January, 1819. The work, *Ueber das Wesen des Gelehrten*, to which reference is here made, consists of lectures delivered at Erlangen in 1805, and may be considered, says Fichte in the preface, as 'a new and improved edition of the Lectures on the Vocation of the Scholar,' published by him twelve years previously, soon after his arrival at Jena. A translation of the work, by William Smith, has passed through two editions in England. In the second lecture, the philosopher undertakes to define his notion of 'a Divine Idea as the ultimate and absolute foundation of all appearance,' and to render it 'clear and intelligible by means of its applications.' According to him, literary men are the appointed interpreters of this Divine Idea. Some readers may prefer the less transcendental view of D'Israeli, who represents scholars standing along 'the genealogical lines of genius' as the great lights of the world by whom the torch of knowledge has been successively seized and transmitted from one to the other. This is that noble image borrowed from a Grecian game, which Plato has applied to the rapid generation of man to mark how the continuity of human affairs is maintained from age to age. The torch of genius is perpetually transferred from hand to hand amidst this fleeting scene.

To return to Fichte—it has been justly remarked that however extravagant we may consider his theoretical science, yet it is impossible to read his noble sentiments on human duty, and to see them exemplified in his own eventful life, without feeling our moral weakness reproved, and our moral strength invigorated.

P. 17. VOLTAIRE AND ROUSSEAU.—The reader may consult with advantage the biographical notices of these celebrated authors in the second volume of Mrs. Shelley's Lives of Eminent Literary and Scientific Men of France. That valuable work, which has been incorpo-

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rated with Dr. Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia, comprises within brief limits a large amount of information respecting Montaigne, Rabelais, Corneille, Rochefaucauld, Molière, La Fontaine, Pascal, Madame de Sevigné, Boileau, Racine, Fénélon, Voltaire, Rousseau, Condorcet, Mirabeau, Madame Roland, Madame de Staël, and many of their respective contemporaries.

P. 21. CHATEAUBRIAND, the survivor of three French Revolutions, is a living monument of history. His writings, extending, like a bridge, from century to century, connect the literature of a past with that of the present period. His life, itself a greater poem than any of his productions in verse, moves, with the sustained march of an epic, amidst the vicissitudes of nearly a hundred years. Two worlds, brought face to face; a revolution which mows down the nations like grass; the conflict of two civilizations, furiously bent upon destroying each other; the death-struggle of the past with the future; and, in this terrible and mighty Shaksperian drama, two entire generations and twenty hostile peoples, for spectators—for combatants, men like Mirabeau, Louis XVI., Marat, Washington, Napoleon, Goethe and Byron, Canning and Talleyrand, symbols of all the social principles of that double era, literary and political, which dates from the close of the 18th century;—such, says *La Galerie de la Presse*, is the immense circle which embraces like a sparkling and luminous zone, the life of Chateaubriand, this life the epic poem, the dramatic history, the Odyssey of modern times. The triple career of Chateaubriand as a traveller, a poet, a legislator, can be fitly traced by no other than his own pen. And we may expect in his promised *Mémoires d'outre Tombeau*, a large and solemn gallery where the painter himself shall have arranged the marvellous succession of magic pictures which it would be presumption to think of enclosing within the limits of a meagre note.

The criticisms in the text, upon the works of this illustrious author, are, in the main, judicious. But it is difficult to resist the fascinations of his page even when disfigured by too luxuriant forms of expression. And, as an American, who first read the prose-poem, Les Natchez, by the flickering light of pine-knots in those woods of the South-west where it was probably composed, or, at least, projected, I need not here dissemble the pleasure with which I sometimes enjoyed, while in Paris, the rare privilege of seeing this celebrated writer, many of whose finest descriptions had been inspired by the scenery of my native land.

In 1830, the poet was deprived of his place in the Chamber of Peers and a yearly income of twelve thousand francs, in consequence of refusing to take the oath of allegiance to Louis Philippe. Since that period, he has adhered, with chivalrous fidelity, to the Duke of Bordeaux, whom he regards as his lawful sovereign. For several years past, im-

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mured in strict retirement, he has been calmly awaiting the hour which shall summon him to a grave, already chosen by himself, at Saint-Malo in Brittany. He was born at Saint-Malo, on the 4th of September, 1769.

A biographical account of Chateaubriand, with a full list of his works, will be found in *La Littérature Française Contemporaine.*

P. 27. MORALITY OF PARISIAN JOURNALISTS.—In a melodrama, *Le Chiffonnier de Paris*—the Rag-Picker of Paris, which was very successful, about a year ago, at the Porte St. Martin, the author, M. Felix Pyat, introduced a scene in a room at the Maison d'Or, one of the most sumptuous among Parisian restaurants. At a table surrounded by revellers who have just come from a masked ball at the opera, sits a young man, dressed as fantastically as any of his boon companions, male and female, with whom he occasionally interchanges a kiss, a witticism, or a glass of sparkling champagne, while he continues busily writing an article on Modesty for the next number of the Young Ladies' Magazine. That young man, it is to be feared, is a type of a large class of journalists in Paris. The vices of the roués under the Regency have been inherited by a set of youths who superadd the vice of hypocrisy, and profess to teach moral maxims which they daily violate. Their life seems to be divided into two distinct and contradictory parts. Pen in hand, they inculcate the noblest principles with all the austerity of modern Stoics. Their task finished, they throw aside at the feet of courtezans the mask which they have worn in public. Defenders of virtue, and doers of evil, their actions perpetually give the lie to their articles. The Beauvallon case, (in which figured Lola Montez, whose name, then allied to that of Dujarrier, the editor who was mortally wounded in duel by Beauvallon, another editor, has since become more widely notorious in connection with that of the doting old king of Bavaria,) occasioned curious developments of the life led by some Parisian journalists. "They give themselves," declares one of their own countrymen, "to gambling, debauchery, and all kinds of disorder; they mingle duels and dissipation, blood and voluptuousness, and completely forget in the evening all that they have written in the morning." The picture is not overcharged. There are, it is true, journalists who must be honored for their integrity and blameless lives, who are in private what they wish and ought to be before the public; who write as they think, and act as they write. But it is equally true that the daily press has, for some years, been sinking into discredit through the misconduct of some of its prominent contributors. This accusation may be brought against journalists of all parties. But perhaps an unprejudiced observer would not err if he should hold the lately dominant party responsible, in a large measure, for having increased the evil. Those were chiefly guilty who sold the columns of their journals to a dynasty which seems to have aimed systematically to

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stifle all honorable sentiments, and to excite in men's hearts an immoderate, an insatiable love of money. They became propagators of that *religion of material interests* which the late rulers of France labored too successfully to establish. Is it surprising that the gratified lust of gold led to frightful excesses of luxury and vice?

P. 28. LITERATURE, AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1830.—Alison has been led by his political principles to ascribe to the Revolution an extraordinary change in the lighter branches of French literature. In an article in Blackwood's Magazine on "France in 1833," he says, "Romance has now become blended with sensuality; German extravagance with French licentiousness; the demons of the air with the corruptions of the world. The modern French novels are not one whit less profligate than those of Louis XV., but they are infinitely more extravagant, wild, and revolting;" and he afterwards declares, "it was not till the triumph of the Barricades had cast down the barriers of authority and influence, and let in a flood of licentiousness upon all the regions of thought, that the present intermixture of extravagance and sensuality took place." But unprejudiced observers will be disposed to seek elsewhere than in the Revolution the source of corrupt fictitious writings, and to agree with our author that all to be admitted is, that a few obscure literary maniacs have taken advantage of the greater liberty of the press to give vent to their distorted conceptions; which is, we believe, the full extent of the change as affects the literary character of France.

P. 29. SHAKSPEARE'S influence on French literature is still so limited that a superficial observer might not clearly perceive it. But when we consider the exclusive tastes of the French, their implicit obedience for centuries to the conventional rules of tragedy, and their anti-English prejudices confirmed by the anathema of Voltaire against masterpieces which have been sacrilegiously decried by them as *farces monstrueuses*, the fit amusement of a barbarian people, we shall be disposed to see in the bare recognition of Shakspeare as a Master of the Drama, at once a proof and a result of his influence. Such a recognition was made at Paris in 1845 by the success, however incomplete and temporary, which attended Mr. Macready's representation of Hamlet. Public homage was then rendered to a long-contested superiority. This reception of the English drama contrasting favorably with that given to it in former years, indicated the progress of the national mind.

The great dramatist, indeed, has been almost unknown in France, except through the medium of wretched translations, or rather travesties, like those of Ducis, and through the extravagancies of certain writers who fancied themselves imitators of Shakspeare, when they were outraging nature, sense, and decency. It is therefore less surprising that the

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absurd antipathies of French critics ("*cette froide nation littéraire*," as M. Guizot calls them,) should have hitherto prevailed against the due influence of the poet who wrote for all nations and for all time.

Within the last thirty years, some of the most distinguished French authors have sought to interpret to their country the sublime genius whom they have learned to revere. "Voltaire," says M. Guizot, in his charming Life of Shakspeare, "was the first who spoke of the genius of Shakspeare, and though he treated him as a barbarian, the public thought he said too much about him. It would have been deemed a sort of profanation to apply to rude and formless works the words genius and glory. Now, the glory and the genius of Shakspeare are no longer discussed. Nobody contests them; a greater question has arisen, viz. Whether the dramatic system of Shakspeare is not better than that of Voltaire?" M. Guizot's Essay, in which the sentence occurs, was published in 1821, and doubtless helped to accelerate that change in public opinion, the course of which it describes. The historical sense (*"historische sinn,"* as the Germans term it) which shines through this whole essay, prepares the mind to receive and appreciate all high and great manifestations of human thought, however new and unfamiliar.

The dramatic revolution of Paris has been correctly dated as anterior to the Revolution of July. The *Cromwell* of M. Victor Hugo, published in 1828, was itself a protest against the constraints imposed on the French drama, and the preface to it contained an eloquent, though somewhat affected and fantastic plea in favor of innovation. The dramatic instincts of M. Alexandre Dumas, (who, in spite of all the reproaches which his numerous defects and vices as a literary man have occasioned, possesses undeniable genius,) were first awakened by the representations given at Paris, in 1827, by the English actors, and he has ever since been a zealous admirer of Shakspeare. Zeal, even if tempered with too little knowledge, could not be ineffectual in the writings of so popular an author as Dumas, who has contributed not a little to extend among the French his own admiration of the Shaksperian drama. Poets, like M. Alfred de Vigny, Antony Deschamps, Léon de Wailly, and Auguste Barbier, have nobly devoted their energies to the difficult task of translating *what may be translated* in several of the tragedies of Shakspeare. Numerous other translators have labored more humbly and with indifferent success, in the same direction. Several editions of the entire works of Shakspeare have appeared in French, two of which, one by M. Francisque Michel, 3 vols. in 8vo, and another by Benjamin Laroche, 7 vols. in 12mo, enjoy a certain reputation.

The French need no longer wholly misapprehend our glorious Shakspeare. His influence will powerfully affect their own dramatic literature. French tragedy has some of the finest didactic poetry in the world, "peculiarly adapted," as Mr. Landor has observed, "both to direct the rea-

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son and to control the passions:" it is by no means lifeless, especially when animated by the voice and action of Rachel. But its forms seem to us cold and stiff, and we rejoice to believe that the spirit of Shakspeare's immortal productions—a spirit able to "create a soul beneath the ribs of death,"—is becoming more and more deeply infused into it.

P. 32. '*The influence of Letters is one of the most potent influences in France.*'— Mr. Bulwer, in his admirable work on France, Social, Literary, Political, has fully recognized and illustrated this influence. "Overturn the monarchy:—Give me the liberty of the press, and I will restore it in six months," was the noble expression of an author (M. de Châteaubriand) confident in his talent, confident in the genius of his countrymen, and only wrong in the folly of his cause. A great writer in France is a great power. The baron of feudal times sallied forth against his neighbor or his sovereign, with his armed retainers at his heels; and in those days of violence, the goodness of the right depended on the goodness of the sword; the courtier in France, who succeeded the baron, abandoned the glaive and the gauntlet—for the Graces—and trusted to an appropriate smile and a well-turned compliment for the success of his career. But mark yonder pale young man; feeble in his person, slovenly in his dress—holding his pen with a trembling hand, doubled up over his paper! That young man has come from some mean abode, from some distant province, where, amid penury and insignificance, with his eyes now fixed on the page of history, now on the heading of a newspaper, he has long indulged his reveries of immortality, and his hopes of power.* In him see the baron and the courtier of the day; he attacks the monarch or the minister, but it is not with the falchion and the lance. He glides into the cabinet and the boudoir, not in a powdered wig and an embroidered waistcoat, but bound in vellum. He does not measure his force or his address with yours, but his intelligence: he is the person to admire; he is the person to fear; he is the person—in France which he is nowhere else.... Observe! Messrs. Cousin, Villemain, and Royer-Collard are made peers, because they are very learned and eloquent professors. M. Lamartine is elected a representative of the French people on account of his poems—M. Arago on account of his mathematical acquisitions—M. Thiers on account of his talent as a journalist and an historian..... The authority of letters now extending and maintaining liberty in France, originated in despotism; and the class carried by the revolution into of-

* Mirabeau, consulted by the Queen of France; and the Institût admitted to the council of Napoleon:—these are the pictures present to the young man who, in some remote village, surrounded by poverty, and born a little above the plough, pursues with indefatigable perseverance studies which he sees every day conducting his fellows to the highest situations in letters and the State, and which, if sometimes a cause of misery to himself, are still a source of energy, and strength, and prosperity to his country.

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fice was encouraged under the ministry of Napoleon, and created by the policy of Richelieu.

It is men of this same class, who, through newspapers and books, have so wrought upon the popular will as to cause the recent overthrow of Louis Philippe. The homely but expressive term—"the pudding-sticks of revolution"—which has been applied to the labors of the Encyclopedists, belongs as well to the opposition journals under the late reign, and especially to the historical works of writers like Michelet, Louis Blanc, and Lamartine.

P. 35. SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE in France continues, since 1830, to exhibit in its various departments the wonderful activity which has always characterized it. A note like the present can but allude to the distinction which the French have justly acquired in that wide and exalted sphere of human effort. Indeed it is written less even for that purpose, than to congratulate our own community upon having recently honored itself by inviting to our midst a savant, the chosen friend of CUVIER, we may say, his successor, whom, although a Swiss by birth, the Scientific Literature of France is proud to claim as one of its celebrities. It is indebted to him for some of the richest contributions which it has received in modern times. I refer, of course, to M. LOUIS AGASSIZ, Professor of Zoölogy and Botany in Harvard University.

A more complete notice of the life and works of the eminent naturalist than that in the *Littérature Française Contemporaire*, has appeared in the Mass. Quarterly Review, Vol. I. No. 1.

The reader will be pleased to learn that Prof. AGASSIZ, in connection with Dr. A. A. GOULD, has prepared for the use of schools and colleges, a treatise on the Principles of Zoölogy. The first part, devoted to Comparative Physiology, has just been published by Gould, Kendall and Lincoln. The second part, on Systematic Zoölogy, will complete a work which cannot fail to be universally acceptable.

P. 40. '*Doubtless literature, allowed its natural and illimitable compass, embraces all intellectual labors.*' The word *literature*, says De Quincy, is a perpetual source of confusion, because it is used in two senses, and those senses liable to be confounded with each other. In a philosophical use of the word, literature is the direct and adequate antithesis of books of knowledge. But in a popular use it is a mere term of convenience for expressing inclusively the total books in any language.—By books of knowledge are meant generally all books in which the matter to be communicated is paramount to the manner or form of its communication ("ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri"). It is difficult to construct the idea of "literature," with severe accuracy; for it is a fine art—the supreme fine art, and liable to the difficulties which attend such a subtle notion.

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I cannot lose this opportunity to refer to the little book from which the preceding sentences are taken. Nowhere else can be found more clearly distinguished the antithesis power and knowledge as the philosophical expression for literature (i. e. Literae Humaniores, and antiliterature, i. e. Literæ didacticæ—Παιδεια). All that is literature, seeks to communicate power; all that is not literature, to communicate knowledge—such is a brief statement of the views which the English Opium-Eater illustrates with equal force and beauty. His small volume, with its unpretending title of Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected, is full of pregnant hints of wisdom for the scholar.

P. 64. The School of French Sensationalism, in which our author has enumerated Cabanis, Volney, Garat, Destutt de Tracy, and Broussais, counts at present another distinguished name, that of M. Auguste Comte, whose brilliant scientific genius has raised him to the very highest rank of modern authors, and given him a reputation not confined to France, but as extensive as the cultivation of philosophy itself. M. Comte was originally an offspring of the school of Saint-Simon, and in some respects has ever retained an affinity with the doctrines of that remarkable sect; yet his profound researches in science, and his independence of mind as a thinker, have given him a position far beyond that of a mere partisan to any system of philosophy whatever. Up to the year 1816, he was a teacher in the Polytechnic School at Paris: on relinquishing his more regular duties there, he devoted ten years of his life to the preparation of a course of lectures on *Positive Philosophy*: these he delivered in 1829, before an audience at Paris, comprehending many of the most eminent philosophers of the country, and has since re-elaborated and published. His lectures in 1847 were numerously attended. Among the foreigners present might have been noticed several Germans who had already gained at home no small reputation as students of philosophy. M. Quérard erred in stating (France Littér. t. II. p. 265) that M. Comte died in 1827.

A full abstract and examination of the Positive Philosophy is given by Morell, pp. 354—361. Atheism has never had a bolder or more powerful champion than M. Comte.

P. 67. De Lamennais' politico-metaphysical doctrines, as embodied in his *Esquisse d'une Philosophie* are faithfully outlined in Morell's Hist. of Mod. Phil. pp. 533—537. The sixth and last volume is yet to appear. When completed, we shall have, says Morell, the sketch of a philosophy which, however its truth be adjudged, none can deny to present a noble monument of the highest philosophical genius and power. As an effort of inventive thinking and logical deduction, the philosophy we have been examining is doubtless inferior to the principal German systems, to which

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it probably owes much of its depth. But what it fails in point of originality, is amply repaid us in point of style. M. de Lamennais is reckoned among the very first masters of prose composition, and no exposition we could give of his ideas can convey the least conception of the perspicuity, the brilliancy, even the sublimity, with which he threads his way through the lofty regions of thought which he essays to track. Taken as a whole, we know of few modern attempts to unite the whole mass of human knowledge in one connected affiliation of ideas, which has greater claims upon the attention of every philosophical, and, we may even add, of every earnest and religious mind. Much there will, doubtless, be to reject, but strange indeed will it be, if in such a mass of deep and oft-times devotional thinking, we do not gather some precious gems of truth which will far more than repay the labor which may be expended upon it.

P. 67. M. DE BONALD, who is here ranked as one of the ablest and most successful defenders of the Catholic philosophy, was born in 1762, and died in 1840. His name suggests the propriety of mentioning in this note several other defenders of the same philosophy.

The ABBE BAUTAIN has based his system on a variation of the principle of authority advocated by De Bonald. A compendium of the philosophical opinions of Bautain appeared in a small tractate in 1833; this treatise has since been republished as a preliminary discourse to his *Psychologie Expérimentale* (1839); to which has since been added another work, entitled *Philosophie Morale* (1842). M. Bautain, together with MM. Jouffroy and Damiron, were the three earliest and most able pupils of Cousin at the Normal School. His philosophy often betrays the master-mind who instructed him.

M. BUCHEZ, like Pierre Leroux, had his philosophical ability first awakened in the Saint-Simonian School, and, like him also, has since its disruption assumed an independent position. Like all the minds which received their first impulse from the doctrines of sociology, he has taken his stand upon the idea of human progress, and sought for the solution of his philosophical problems from the phenomena of history. In his *Essai d'une Traité de Philosophie* he attempted to explain every great philosophical question from a moral point of view, considering that they find here their most satisfactory solution. It is, however, in his *Introduction à la Science de l'Histoire* that he has pursued his own peculiar doctrines with the greatest fulness and originality. In this work, while on the one side the idea of progress is his guiding star, yet it is evident, from his general style of remark that he has been led near to the Catholic doctrines of Christianity, and finds in them the germ of all the notions which it is the aim of philosophy to evolve from the phenomena of universal history. The method of philosophical investigation thus determined has been pursued by several other writers of considerable ability. M. J. F. BOUL-

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LAND has followed it up by an *Essai d'Histoire Universelle, ou Exposé comparatif des Traditions de tous les Peuples*, and a similar work, entitled *Transformations Religieuses et Morales des Peuples*. DR. OTT also, a bitter and uncompromising opponent of the Hegelian method, has joined himself to this school in his *Manuel d'Histoire Universelle*.

It will be seen from an examination of the views held by the principal French authors belonging to the Catholic or theological school, that while they all take their stand upon catholic truth, mediated by *authority*, yet the principle of authority itself is accepted in many different significations. With M. de Lamennais, in his earlier writings, catholic truth was that which comes down to us by *human testimony*, from the primitive revelations of God to mankind; while in his later works, it is that which rests upon the fundamental belief of our moral and intellectual nature. With M. de Bonald, the principle of authority vested itself in the primitive fact of language; a theory by which he sought to establish the validity and divine authority both of the monarchical and ecclesiastical institutions of the Christian world. With the Baron d'Eckstein, the doctrine of authority assumes another and more genial form; it is authority based upon the deepest researches into the historical facts and catholic beliefs of universal man. The more narrow and least tenable theory of authority is that of M. de Maistre, which makes catholic truth exist simply in the bosom of the Catholic church, and ignores all philosophy which does not base itself upon its peculiar doctrines.

This latter system still numbers its advocates in France, and is maintained, in some instances, with an amount of learning and ability which, while we repudiate the doctrine, commands our respect for its advocates. We might mention the elegant *conférences* of M. LACORDAIRE, and the elaborate work of M. NICOLAS on Philosophy applied to Religion, as recent instances of the activity of this school. These, however, belong more to the department of theology.

With few exceptions, the Catholic clergy seem for some time past, to have abandoned the field of philosophical discussion. Their general position with reference to it, at present, is defined by the motto of the manual of instruction used in nearly all the seminaries in France—*celebriora tantum exposui, nullum propagare volui.*

In the Hist. of Mod. Philosophy, (pp. 542—546) is an exposition of the plan and arguments of an Essay on Pantheism by M. MARET. This *Essai sur le Panthéisme dans les Sociétés Modernes* is pronounced by Morell to be the most able work of a purely philosophical character with which he is acquainted, and perhaps the most perfect example of the views and position of the philosophico-catholic school in France.

Among the few members of the Protestant communion who have contributed, directly or indirectly, to the modern philosophical literature of France, no name, perhaps, has been more influential than that of M. P.

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A. STAPFER, originally a preacher, and a professor of philosophy and theology at Berne, and afterwards Minister from Switzerland to Paris, while Buonaparte was First Consul. With Ancillon, who was also originally a Protestant preacher, and Villers, the first French expositor of Kant, and Madame de Stael, who, although not a philosopher, has justly been described as having done more for philosophy in France, than any writer of the same age—this truly Christian sage united in giving the impulse to which the French public owe their reception of the most valuable influences from German literature and Philosophy. After his retirement in 1803 from political activity until his death in 1840, his years were devoted to the study of ancient and modern theories of philosophy. And that he sought for wisdom from a deeper than any human source was evinced by his dying expression, "*J'ai examiné tous les systèmes et je n'ai trouvé que des citernes crevassées*—I have examined all systems, and I have found them but broken cisterns." An eloquent notice of his life, character, and writings, from the pen of the late M. ALEXANDRE VINET, precedes an edition of his *Mélanges Philosophiques Littéraires, Historiques et Religieux*, 2 vols. Paris. VINET himself possessed many of the highest qualities of the philosophical mind, as will abundantly appear in his Complete Works, which are now in course of preparation for the press. In the notes relative to the chapter on Criticism, farther reference will be made to both Stapfer and Vinet. It may here be added that a young professor at Lausanne, CHARLES SECRETAN MULLER, who has distinguished himself by numerous philosophical articles in *Le Semeur*, recently went to Paris for the purpose of publishing a work on Philosophy which had the good fortune to have been commended to Vinet. But the Revolution of 1848, like the Revolution of 1830, put an unexpected stop to many literary enterprises, and to this among the number. It is to be hoped that such a period of stagnation in philosophy as lasted from 1830 until 1838, will not succeed the recent revolution.

P. 89. COUSIN, notwithstanding this expression of respect for Christianity, is obnoxious to the charge of having treated two points in particular,—the notion of Deity, and that of Inspiration,—in such a manner as to open the door for an almost boundless advocacy of religious scepticism. It is not without a careful personal examination of his views on these points, that I have been led to concur fully in the opinion of Morell respecting them.

Cousin's notion of Deity verges closely upon the principle of Pantheism. Even if we admit that it is *not* a doctrine, like that of Spinoza, which identifies God with the abstract idea of substance; or even like that of Hegel, which regards Deity as synonymous with the absolute law and process of the universe; if we admit, in fact, that the Deity of Cou-

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sin possesses a conscious personality, yet still it is one which contains in itself the infinite personality and consciousness of every subordinate mind. God is the ocean—we are but the waves; the ocean may be one individuality, and each wave another; but still they are *essentially* one and the same. We see not how Cousin's theism can possibly be consistent with any idea of moral evil; neither do we see how, starting from such a dogma, he can ever vindicate and uphold his own theory of human liberty. On such theistic principles, all sin must be simply *defect*, and all defect must be absolutely fatuitous.

But the most dangerous door into religious scepticism, is the use which Cousin makes of the spontaneity of the human reason, in order to explain the phenomena of inspiration. Reflection alone is considered to be the source of error; while that pure apperception, that instinctive development of thought, which results from spontaneity, is absolutely infallible. Now this spontaneity, it is said, is the foundation of religion. Those who were termed seers, prophets, inspired teachers of ancient times, were simply men who resigned themselves largely to their intellectual instincts, and thus gazed upon truth in its pure and perfect form. They did not reason, they did not search, they did not reflect deeply and patiently, they made no pretension to philosophy; but they received truth spontaneously, as it flowed in upon them from heaven. Now in one sense, all this may be true; but, according to Cousin, this immediate reception of Divine light was nothing more than the *natural* play of the spontaneous reason; nothing more than what has existed, to a greater or less degree in every man of great genius; nothing more than what may now exist in any mind which resigns itself to its own unreflective apperceptions. This being the case, revelation, in the ordinary sense, loses all its peculiar value; every man may be a prophet; every mind has within it the same authority to decide upon truth, as those minds had who dictated the Bible; we have only to sit and listen to the still small voice within, to enjoy a daily revelation, which bears upon it all the marks of absolute infallibility.

This doctrine, of course, may seem very plausible and very flattering; nay, it may arraign some evidence, and boast the explanation of many facts; but, assuredly, it can only be erected and established upon the ruins of all the fundamental evidences of Christianity. When the advocates of this natural spontaneous inspiration will come forth from their recesses of thought, and deliver prophecies as clear as those of the Hebrew seer—when they shall speak with the sublime authority of Jesus of Nazareth, and with the same infinite ease rising beyond all the influences of time, place, and circumstances, explain the past and unfold the future —when they die for the truth they utter, and rise again, as witnesses to its divinity—then we may begin to place them on the elevation which they so thoughtlessly claim; but, until they either prove these *facts* to

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be delusions, or give their parallel in themselves, the world may well laugh at their ambition, and trample their spurious inspiration beneath its feet.

Much as we admire Cousin, while he keeps within his proper limits, and much as we are disposed to maintain the truth of his philosophy, in most of its principal features, we cannot but repudiate, with all our energy, his attempt to intrude upon the sacred province of the Christian revelation. If he will stand up as a theologian, and fight the battle upon its proper grounds, let him do so, and there are plenty to take up the gauntlet which he throws down; but it is not the part, which his own philosophy would dictate, to raise a new theory of revelation to supersede all the rest, without considering the facts and the evidences which the Christian revelation can display.

P. 90. LABORS OF ECLECTICISM.—Morell has given within a brief space so complete a view of the labors of eclecticism in France, during the last fifteen or twenty years, that nothing can be more properly presented here.

Cousin, Jouffroy, and Damiron, form the foremost rank among the abettors of eclecticism; but many names might yet be mentioned in the list of metaphysical writers, which show that there is a *corps de réserve*, to carry on the work as they may be removed from the scene of action. The extraordinary development of a spiritual philosophy under the name of eclecticism, within recent times, presents to us a phenomenon, which is well worth our earnest attention. From the fall of the French republic the age of grossness and materialism began to decliné. A new tone of thinking gradually sprang up, which, while it rejected the excesses of democracy, yet had tasted too much of the principles of national liberty, to admit for a moment the idea of any return to the old régime. This party, which gathered together after the restoration, under the title of *liberalism*, numbered many ardent and philosophical minds, who looked forward to some bright futurity, in which a deep philosophy and a rational faith should spread their benign influence throughout society at large.

The eloquent lectures of Cousin matured these views, and stimulated these hopes; and when the hand of tyranny silenced both his own voice and that of his no less eloquent pupil, and drove them from the halls of public instruction, their deep murmurs only found a readier ear among the more enlightened of the age, as they rolled upwards upon society from the retirement to which persecution had banished them.

"The Globe," which was commenced in Sept. 1824, became the rallying point around which those master spirits of the age were gathered together. Its first editors were MM. Dubois and Leroux; but M. Jouffroy may be regarded as the presiding genius of its earlier efforts.

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While these philosophic minds found here an organ for their murmurs and their hopes, there were others of no inconsiderable influence who indirectly gave it their support. M. Cousin saw in it the fruits of his own otherwise ill-rewarded labors. M. Guizot could not but favor a journal in which his own enlightened views upon European civilization were maintained and expounded; M. de Broglie, and others of like spirit, secretly rejoiced in the broad and liberal principles which were there brought before the public. At the same time, some of the higher order of minds, took part in the movement; so that, in fact, the way was prepared for the brief, but brilliant, revolution of 1830, which repelled the base attempts of a restored monarchy to lay its hand upon the liberties of the nation. This point once achieved, and a period of repose having succeeded, the genius of philosophy began to rouse up its energies to fresh action. From the accession of Louis Philippe to the present hour, the French press has been sending forth a metaphysical literature, which in learning and eloquence will bear a comparison with any former period of philosophical activity. The fruits of it, as seen in the theological and mystical schools, we have already noticed; it remains for us only to notice it more especially in connection with the spirit of modern *eclecticism*.

The labors of eclecticism, during the last fifteen or twenty years, may be distributed into three classes, viz. translations or editions, histories, and original philosophical works. In rendering an account of these labors, we cannot attempt to give anything like a complete list of all the works of a school which has been so unusually productive; we shall merely point out, therefore, some of the principal movements of its more recent activity.

1. With regard to the labors of the editor and translator, it will be recollected that Cousin himself, the head of the school, has nobly led the way in his translation of Plato, and his beautiful editions both of Proclus and Descartes; M. Jouffroy and others have translated the works of Reid and Stewart; and M. Peisse, in addition to "Stewart's Elements," has given to the French public the collected fragments of Sir W. Hamilton. The Charpentier editions of the earlier movements of modern philosophy have all appeared under the direction of the eclectic school. M. Laisset, professor at the Normal school, has furnished us with an admirable translation of Spinoza. M. Jules Simond, also of the Normal school, has performed the same office for Descartes, so far at least as his philosophical writings are concerned; and M. Jacques, professor at the Royal College of Versailles, has edited Liebnitz's and Clarke's philosophical writings in the same form.

With regard to the German philosophy, it may be said now to exist almost complete in the French language. Through the industry of M. J. Tissot professor at Dijon, and M. Jules Barni, professor at the col-

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lege of Charlemagne, together with MM. Mellin and Trullard, the great works of the immortal Kant are now before the French public, in their most intelligible form. M. Paul Grimblot has completed the translation of the two main productions of Fichte and Schelling, the *Wissenchaftslehre* of the one, and *Transcendentaler Idealismus* of the other. Several of their other works have also appeared in able translations by M. Francisque Bouillier, of Lyons, by M. C. Husson, by M. Nicolas, professor at Montauban (author of a defence of Eclectisism against the attacks of Pierre Leroux), and by several other laborers in the same cause. Of the works of Hegel, the lectures on Æsthetics have already appeared, under the care of M. Bénard of Rouen; while some of his other writings, as well as the letters of Jacobi upon Spinoza, are we believe now in progress. When we add that Vico's *Scienza Nuova*, and the philosophical letters of Galuppi, have appeared in recent translations, and that the grand productions, in fact, of every nation, are appropriated sooner or later to the aid of eclecticism, we may reasonably look forward to the advantage of possessing, ere long, the philosophical thinking of the world, in the most lucid and precise of all the languages of mankind.

2. The history of philosophy is a subject to which eclecticism naturally directs its best energies. Nurtured as it is in extensive erudition, it ever seeks to develop the progress of human knowledge, and get as near as possible to the catholic thinking of mankind. M. Cousin has here also led the way at once by his lectures, and by the second series of his philosophical fragments. Since his example has been before the world, many are the works illustrative both of ancient and modern philosophy, which have emanated from the French press. The logic of Aristotle is now translated, and has been copiously illustrated in a mémoire presented to the Académie des Sciences, by M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire. The schools of Megara, of Elis, and of Eretria, have found an historian in M. Mallet, professor at the College of St. Louis; and the philosophical school at Alexandria, with its wonderful mixture of western thought and oriental mysticism, has excited especial attention amongst the eclectic historians. M. B. St. Hilaire, and M. Simon, have each brought their varied and extensive erudition to bear upon the illustration of this remarkable page in the history of the human mind.

The history of Cartesianism has not unnaturally claimed a considerable share of attention from those who wish to vindicate for France the honor of an original and native philosophy.* The last work of M. Damiron, entitled *Essai Sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France, au 17me siècle*, gives a very full and clear description both of Descartes himself, and of the school which he originated; and the mémoire of M. Demoulin, entitled *Cartésianisme*, which gained the prize at the French Insti-

* The still earlier philosophy of France, that of the scholastic age, is portrayed in M. Rémusat's recent work on *Abélard*.

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tute, may be regarded as one of the most complete expositions of the Cartesian spirit and doctrine which have yet appeared.

The philosophy of Germany, being in fact the great repository of spiritualism in human thought, has confessedly exerted a vast and almost inappreciable influence upon the modern school of France. Cousin himself confesses that it was under this influence that his own powers were at once awakened, and directed to the higher problems of fundamental truth. About ten years since, M. Barchou de Penhoen, an intelligent French writer of Portuguese extraction, published an *Histoire de la Philosophie Allemande depius Leibnitz jusqu'a Hegel* in two volumes, 8vo. This was the first attempt that was made to give a systematic and connected view of the German idealism in the French language. M. Ch. Renouvier, in his *Manuel de Philosophie Moderne*, has recently undertaken the same task in a more brief but equally intelligible form, and, in truth, evinces himself a decided leaning to the Hegelian method. In 1846, M. Abel Rèmusat published his report on the mémoires presented to the *Académie des Sciences*, respecting the present state of intellectual philosophy in Germany; which he has introduced by a preface filled with the most masterly illustrations and criticisms upon the principal systems of that country. The prize *mémoire* by M. Willm is now in process of publication (the first of four volumes having just appeared), and promises, when completed, to be by far the most full and detailed exposition of the German philosophy, from Kant to Hegel, which has yet been sent forth from any other than the German press.

3. With regard to original works on philosophy, the eclectic school has already furnished a considerable number, although it has not yet been long enough in existence to produce any great variety of opinion and research. Several of the professors in the different colleges of France have published a *Cours de Philosophie* (as for example M. Mazure of Poictiers), but these are most frequently adapted rather to instruct the student in the *elements* of intellectual science, than to develop any new or advanced views with regard to the great problems of philosophy. Some of the most important points, however, of the philosophy of Cousin, have been elaborated in separate works, among which we may mention, especially, those of M. Gruyer, entitled *Des Causes conditionelles et productiones des Idées*, and *Principes de Philosophie Physique*, intended to give the basis of the metaphysics of nature. Of others, M. F. Bouillier has discussed the doctrine of the impersonal reason; M. Ed. Mercier, the relations between faith and science; while M. Ernest Bessot of Versailles, in a work entitled *Du Spiritualisme et de la Nature*, has ventured upon those most difficult of all questions, which refer to the relations subsisting between creation and the Creator, both in their speculative and practical import.

In the United States, several translations from the works of French

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eclectic writers have appeared. A part of Jouffroy's Introduction to Ethics forms the fifth and sixth volumes of Ripley's Series of Selections from Foreign Literature. The same series includes, I think, the Miscellanies of Cousin. Dr. C. S. Henry, Professor in the University of New York (who has done more than any other American scholar to acquaint his countrymen with the merits of the Eclectic Philosophy, and to defend it against the charges to which it has been exposed), has translated, and published under the title of Elements of Psychology, a portion of Cousin's History of Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century.

Morell concludes his account of Eclecticism in France by stating that 'the highest results of the eclectic school are now (1847) being embodied in the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques*,—perhaps the most complete attempt which has yet been made at a universal biography and critique of all philosophers and their systems.'

For notices of other French philosophical writers than those already mentioned, the reader may be referred to the work from which the notes relative to the second chapter of this treatise have been principally derived. I allude to Morell's admirable Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century. An American edition of this work has been published by R. Carter of New York. Its learned author has added largely by his own observations to the materials for which he acknowledges his indebtedness to Damiron's *Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France au Dixneuviéme Siécle.*

These notes on Eclecticism cannot be closed more fitly than by Morell's remarks concerning the influence of speculative philosophy upon the religious life of the French people. The close of the Revolution found France almost without a religion at all. Direct efforts to awaken religious faith seemed altogether unavailing. The Catholic and the Protestant churches were alike powerless to arouse the mass of the people from their lethargy and unbelief. Just at this point the eclectic philosophy came to their aid, and under its influence, the belief in God and immortality is again spreading among the people. We do not say that the religion of the eclectic philosophers is by any means a perfect one, or that it contains in it anything approaching to the whole of the elements of Christianity; but it still holds up a God to be worshipped, an immortality to be secured, a soul to be inspired; and where these thoughts are impressed, there cannot be an entire indifference to religious truth and religious duty. Admit even that there are doctrines maintained by the eclectics which would disarm inspiration of its glory, that would destroy everything peculiar to the Christian scheme, that would place Christianity itself down under the same category with the religions of mere human invention; still this does not prevent the great ideas which they embody from exerting an influence upon the mind, and preparing it for better things. It may, perhaps, sound harsh to some ears, but we

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firmly believe that the spiritual philosophy of France has done more to bring back the people of that country to a sense of religious obligation, than all the direct efforts of Christian zeal combined. Such efforts are for the most part useless, where the conscience has become seared; where the belief in God has died out; where the hope of immortality has sunk into oblivion. Restore these thoughts to the people, and Christian effort will soon tell upon them with redoubled force.

P. 91. PIERRE LEROUX appears to have been drawn by the late events in France from the retirement in which he had devoted himself to the researches of philosophy. At least, his name is given in the journals among the chiefs of a dictatorship which resulted from the disorders at Limoges attending the recent general elections. The friends of two communists who had been defeated in the election, constructed a sort of provisional government which presented, with that already existing in Paris, the singular spectacle of a double revolutionary movement—'wheel within wheel'—in the midst of the commotions then agitating France. But the French Republic now definitively established, will doubtless easily absorb, or *annex* the Republic of Limoges, permitting M. Leroux to resume his metaphysical studies, or to enter upon political life through a more legitimate avenue.*

The metaphysical acumen and universal learning of M. Leroux unquestionably entitle him to rank among the first thinkers of the age. But his opinions, more or less fully developed in the *Encyclopédie Nouvelle*, *Réfutation de l'Eclecticisme*, *Essai sur l'Egalité*, *De la Doctrine du Progrès Continu*, and in his most elaborate work *De l'Humanité*, *de son Principe*, *et de son Avenir* form a system which is by no means free from imperfections and errors. Like the system of St. Simon and of Fourier, it looks only upon the more outward features of human nature; expects the creation of a state of earthly bliss from the improved arrangements of human society; passes by the real elements of evil and of suffering which lie deep in the core of the human heart; and, in consequence, mistakes the whole nature, genius, purport, grandeur and divinity of Christianity. So far as such speculations bear upon social life, they assume a genial, a benevolent, and a beneficial aspect; they teach us what Christianity has taught them—the principles of charity, peace and human brotherhood. But they comprehend not the deep philosophy of the Christian revelation, which aims at the regeneration of society only through the regeneration of the human soul.

It may here be remarked that in France more than in any other Eu-

* Journals received since this note was written state that Leroux's name appeared on the list of members of the dictatorship proposed at the Hotel de Ville in Paris by the conspirators in the abortive insurrection of the 15th of May. The philosopher has thus far been signally unfortunate in his first steps as a politician.

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ropean nation, thinking minds have been particularly directed to the Philosophy of Social Life. The system of Saint-Simon embraces peculiar philosophical doctrines, as well as the details of a new social constitution. The system of Fourier, which confessedly constitutes a 'great fact' in the literary history of the present day, although it appears prominently as a social theory, is yet grounded in metaphysical principles, and can be viewed, strictly speaking, as a complete system of philosophy. But St. Simon headed a band of political regenerators, and the influence of Fourier's disciples has been decidedly political, at least in its effects as manifested by the revolution of 1848; and M. de Vèricour has quite properly chosen to examine both St. Simonism and Fourierism in connection with the Political Tendencies of French Literature.

Pp. 95—172. THE POLITICAL TENDENCIES of French Literature, as revealed in this treatise were, when it was written (1841), already democratic. With other co-operating causes, they have resulted, sooner than might have been anticipated, in the abdication of Louis Philippe, and the establishment of a Republic. The details of the Revolution of 1848 are so familiar to all that no repetition of them is necessary in this place. It will be sufficient to add a few remarks concerning some of the political writers who are mentioned by De Vèricour, and to notice briefly those whom late events have rendered conspicuous.

Pp. 101 and 168. M. GUIZOT has been so fully described in the text as a vigorous political writer and as a consummate orator, that allusion need here be made only to those errors in his public course which have led to his downfall. He has forfeited his high reputation for integrity by obstinately adhering to the selfish policy pursued by Louis Philippe at home and abroad. It is true that he never abused his opportunities of gaining pecuniary emolument. But with some dispositions, the love of power is stronger than the love of money, and it cannot be asserted that Guizot's position as the most powerful minister in Europe was without attractions for his haughty spirit. That he should have condescended, however, to retain it on such terms as rendered him the tool of an inferior mind, and at least a tacit participator in a notoriously corrupt administration, is indeed surprising, when we consider his transcendent abilities, and the austere virtues which distinguish him as a private individual. His pride, and his overweening contempt for men in general, and for Frenchmen in particular, may explain but cannot excuse his forgetfulness of the fact that 'even the vilest worm will turn if trod upon,' and of the more important fact that it is wrong as well as unsafe to attempt to rule a nation by its vices and its weaknesses rather than by its capacities for excellence.

It is right to acknowledge that largely as personal ambition may have

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influenced the late minister of Foreign Affairs, yet no man in France was more obedient than he to deep and sincere although mistaken convictions. His character was correctly delineated several years ago by an impartial biographer who said of him: *c'est une intelligence élevée et progressive, mais dominatrice par nature, et gouvernementale par conviction.* Although he has in some respects been not unjustly reproached with inconsistency, yet a careful examination will discover a vein of unity running through all his political works, a common basis underlying them all. These all exhibit a desire to reconcile, when, in his view, it is practicable, authority and liberty, and, at the same time, a readiness, when, in his view, it is necessary, to sacrifice the latter to the former. In his acts, as well as in his writings, he has shown himself '*ennemi mortel de tout ce qui ressemble au désordre, et capable, toutes choses réduites au pire, de se jeter, sans hésiter, dans le despotisme qu'il n'aime pas, plutôt que de subir l'anarchie qu'il abhorre*'—a mortal foe to the very semblance of disorder, and capable, in an extremity, of throwing himself without hesitation into the arms of the despotism which he does not love, rather than submit to the anarchy which he abhors.

Born a Protestant on the 4th of October 1787, under the sway of odious laws which debarred his parents from a legal union, François-Pierre-Guillaume Guizot was the son of a distinguished advocate who perished on the scaffold at Nîmes, the 8th of April 1794, three days after the sanguinary victory of Robespierre over Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and the members of the 'Comité de clémence.' Thus the revolution conferred upon him the name and rights of a citizen at the expense of the life of his father, who was suspected of holding opinions opposed to those of the terrible triumvirate. M. de Lomenie, who notices (*Galérie des Contemporaines Illustres, Tome I.*) this concurrence of circumstances, probably does not err by seeking in it the germ of M. Guizot's almost equal antipathy to absolute monarchies and to republican governments.

Even while, from the fall of the Decazes ministry until the Martignac ministry came into office in 1828, M. Guizot was numbered in the ranks of the opposition, his attacks upon the agents of government betrayed a real sympathy with government. For him the capital crime of the Villèle ministry was not so much in the mere abuse of power, as in the consequences of that abuse which perilled the principle of authority by exposing it to a deadly conflict. Immediately previous to the memorable Three Days of 1830, his apparent violence was in truth a vain but strenuous effort to save the fated bark of state from the dangers upon which it was soon to be wrecked. The protest which, in behalf of the deputies, he drafted on the 27th of July against the ordinances, manifested more respect than hostility. If it seemed seditious to the infatuated rulers, it was looked upon as pale and timid by the people, and events showed that the people were right.

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The Revolution of 1830 may have disconcerted M. Guizot for an instant; but it could not discourage him. As soon as the principle, which was the object of his solicitude, fell, he hastened to lift it up, to secure its foothold, by degrees to reanimate it, and at length to urge it boldly forward in the direction in which he would have guided it before its fall. He was so blinded by his prejudices in favor of rigid authority as to see no hope for France save under the auspices of Louis Philippe, whose firm hand he therefore grasped in his own, while both strove with an energy and perseverance worthy of a better cause to turn back the tide of democracy, and prevent any further encroachments upon the traditionary prerogatives of the crown. Guizot may have imagined that the interests of France depended on strengthening the ties which bound the Orleans dynasty to it. But he has been punished for his mistaken, and, in a measure, criminal confidence, in the wily son of Philippe Egalité. He aspired to the smile of the prince rather than the gratitude of the people who alone had clothed that prince with power. Now, when the monarch has been stripped of his brief authority by the hands of the same people, the minister who served his king better than he served his country shares the disgrace which both monarch and minister have merited.

It is rumored that the ex-minister is preparing at London a defence of his administration, to be published under the title of *Appel à la raison publique*. The dignity characteristic of M. Guizot, and challenging our respect for him amidst his misfortunes, leads us to give more credence to a different rumor, that, abandoning the heated questions of the day, he has resumed those great historical labors on which the purest portion of his fame will rest. If, however, the first rumor prove true, a plea by Guizot for his own cause will surely be entitled to a candid hearing from the world, although the French who have passed (they believe justly) so severe a verdict upon him, might counsel him to await in silence the verdict of posterity; or to content himself with giving vent to his emotions in the language which, he is aware, is put by Shakspeare in the mouth of another fallen courtier:

> Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness!
> * * * * * I have ventur'd
> Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
> This many summers in a sea of glory;
> But far beyond my depth; my high-blown pride
> At length broke under me; and now has left me,
> Weary, and old with service, to the mercy
> Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
> Vain pomp, and glory of this world, I hate ye;
> I feel my heart new open'd: O, how wretched
> Is that poor man, that hangs on princes' favors!
> * * * * * * * * * *
> * * when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,
> Never to hope again.

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P. 109. **Beranger** has published very little for several years past. Undervaluing his renown as the first song-writer of the age, it is said that he has sought anonymously for both dramatic and epic fame. And at Tours, where he has long lived in retirement, he has been occupied in preparing a *Biographie des Contemporains*, which is to appear only after his death. Judging from the opinion of his intimate friends, and from the fragments of prose for which we are indebted to his pen, this historical dictionary will show that in Béranger the qualities of a historian, a philosopher, and a statesman, are added to those of a poet The characteristics which we may anticipate in that work have been already so clearly revealed, and the influence of those masterpieces which he has chosen to call *songs* has been so extraordinary, that the free suffrages of the people lately elected him to a seat in the National Assembly. He desired, however, to retain that independence which has been the chief object of his life, and which he deems incompatible, in his case, with holding any public office. A signal tribute in his honor was paid by the unanimous refusal of his colleagues to accept his first resignation. But when he proffered it for the second time in a most touching letter, the earnest wishes of the *vieux rimeur* could no longer be thwarted. The text contains, especially in the chapter on Poetry, so correct an appreciation of Béranger, that few words need here be added. Pierre de Béranger, notwithstanding the prefix to his paternal name, is not of noble descent. Born, the 17th of August, 1780, in the humble dwelling of a tailor at Paris, his childhood was passed in the streets, at a period when the very air was pregnant with revolutionary emotions. His first lesson in history was the destruction of the Bastile. No wonder that the deepest source of his inspiration has always been sympathy with the people; as he says in a preface to one of his publications, *le peuple, c'est ma muse!* A printer's apprentice, he began to rhyme on his own account, while *composing* the verses of others. Indebted for his early education to *l'Institut Patriotique*, at Peronne, a school where neither Latin nor Greek were taught, he has never learned those languages; he has divined the spirit of the ancient classics, without becoming familiar with their marvellous perfection of form, which, nevertheless, he has rivalled. As a poet of love and wine he is not inferior to Anacreon or Tibullus in a species of verse which holds indeed morally a low rank, but cannot lose its fascinations so long as human nature remains the same. His fine strokes of satire, and his strains of elegiac tenderness are equally inimitable. And in many of his political poems, he rises with unconscious majesty to the heights of lyrical grandeur, justifying the declaration of Benjamin Constant: '*Beranger fait des odes sublimes en croyant ne faire que des chansons*'—his songs are sublime odes. In short, he is well described by M. de Loménie as '*génie quadruple qui s'inspire*

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par les sens, par l'esprit, par le cœur et par l'ame—a fourfold genius whom senses, head, heart, and soul inspire.'

P. 110. M. DE CORMENIN, born at Paris, on the 6th of January, 1788, was, like all the young men of that epoch, a violent Buonapartist in 1810, was a moderate legitimist during the restoration, content with receiving from Louis XVIII. the title of baron, and from Charles X. that of viscount, became under the reign of Louis Philippe, the most logical and at the same time, one of the most vehement advocates of the radical party, and is now, since the Revolution of 1848, associated with the most active republicans in the National Assembly. The first edition of his great work on *Le Droit Administratif* appeared in 1823, and through all the phases of opinion which his various writings have assumed, as well as in the speeches which he used to read in the chambers (he makes no pretensions to oratory), those superior administrative talents were apparent which have quite properly caused him to be placed on the committee appointed to draft a new constitution for France. The pamphlets of M. de Cormenin have equalled the wide popularity. and possess many of the distinguished merits of the pamphlets of his model, Paul Louis Courier, the prince of pamphleteers. The volume mentioned in the text as entitled *Orateurs Parlementaires*, has been incorporated in De Cormenin's *Livre des Orateurs* which has reached, I think, its twentieth edition. Portions of it have been translated in this country by a Member of the New York Bar, and were published under the supervision of G. H. Colton, the lamented editor of the American Review.

P. 111. M. DE LAMMENAIS, as well as M. de Cormenin, is a member of the National Assembly, and of the committee for drafting a new constitution. He has also founded recently a journal which is the organ of his peculiar sentiments. He has for some time past led a secluded life, but like Achilles, the vigorous controversialist has now come out of his tent, to join a conflict in which no more heroic soul than his own is engaged.

P. 117. M. DE GENOUDE, whose activity and talents have rendered him conspicuous both as a pulpit orator and as a politician, was a prominent representative of the Catholic party in the late Chamber of Deputies. But his name does not appear in the list of the National Assembly.

It may here be stated that M. LACORDAIRE, the most celebrated of the fifteen ecclesiastics belonging to the Assembly, has just resigned his seat. Perhaps this is a significant token of the disappointment which he and his friends begin to anticipate with reference to their hopes that a reaction in favor of the elder Bourbon family would follow the Revolution of 1848. The Catholic clergy, especially in the south of France, are

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quite generally legitimists. The excellent character borne by the majority of the rural priesthood, their devotion to the humble labors of charity and instruction, have been no less influential than the learning and eloquence of a few popular divines at Paris. And the indications of a decided *rapprochement* between the priests and the people were so numerous about a year ago, as to lead me then to write: Should another revolution occur, I am persuaded that the priesthood would not be likely to be included, as of old, among the objects of the popular anathema. Already, in the disorders which have troubled several provinces during the few months past, the watchword has been 'down with the citizen, the *bourgeois*,' whereas once it would have been 'down with the noble and the priest.' My expectation has been verified in the recent Revolution by the absence of that fanaticism which in 1830 would not have allowed the Abbé Lacordaire to wear, as he has lately worn, his costume of a Dominican monk in the National Assembly, and which, in 1798, might not have respected even his person; by the reverence shown, in the midst of popular fury in February, to the symbols of religious worship found in the chapel of the Tuileries, when that palace was sacked; by the eagerness with which the people sought the benediction of the priests for the liberty-trees erected in Paris during the early displays of victorious joy; and by several other manifestations of a spirit wholly unlike the hostility which excited their forefathers in the first Revolution. But respect for the priests, and for the religion which they teach, is not identical in the minds of the French with sympathy in the political prejudices which many of the clergy entertain, and of which M. BERRYER and M. DE MONTALEMBERT, both of whom are members of the Assembly, are the most zealous and able defenders among those Catholic laymen who imitate the fidelity of the illustrious CHATEAUBRIAND to the cause of the Bourbons. Should, however, a monarchy be inflicted on France as a punishment for unworthily forfeiting their glorious opportunity of establishing a permanent republic, it is not impossible, perhaps it is not improbable, that the nation might prefer as its king the Duke of Bordeaux to the Count of Paris,—unless some new Napoleon should arise to wrest from them the liberty of choice, and decide the question by his sword.

The only Protestant clergyman in the National Assembly is M. ATHANASE COQUEREL, well known to American residents in Paris as an eloquent preacher at the *Oratoire* in the rue St. Honoré. His theological opinions, coinciding in some respects with New England Unitarianism, differ from those of his no less eloquent colleague, M. MONOD, whose fame is more exclusively confined than his to religious circles. One of M. Coquerel's writings, published last year, and entitled *Le Christianisme Expérimental*, received from the secular press a degree of attention rarely accorded in that quarter to works of a similar description. M. Coquerel is the adopted son of Helen Maria Williams, whose name is familiar to

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our community, and his early education gave him such opportunities of becoming acquainted with the progress of civil and religious freedom in Great Britain and the United States, as cannot fail to be of service to him in his present position.

The clerical members of the National Assembly will doubtless take peculiar interest in the Church and State question which must soon be discussed by them and their fellow-representatives. The apathy with which the great body of French Protestants have regarded this question, or rather their general willingness to have their societies salaried by the State, is truly surprising. But a new feeling has lately sprung up in their midst, prompting some of the most active and far-sighted among them to found a Society for the Application of Christian Ethics to Social Questions. One of the principal objects of this Society will be to promote as speedily as practicable the entire separation of Church and State. M. le Pasteur BRIDELL, who is now travelling in this country to awaken the sympathies of American Protestants in behalf of their French brethren, and M. HENRI LUTTEROTH, the able conductor of *Le Semeur*, the leading Protestant journal in France, and M. DE GASPARIN, member of the late Chamber of Deputies, are among the foremost in this important movement. Since the Revolution, one of the Catholic bishops in France, has addressed a circular to his diocese, in which he expresses a hope that French Catholics may now enjoy 'the liberty of their brethren in the United States.' Perhaps, however, he may not include in this their complete independence of support from government. M. D'ALTON SHEE, a member of the late Chamber, who declared that he is 'neither Catholic nor Protestant,' and who unfolded his views last year in his *Opinion sur les Religions d'Etat*, represents a large class who would surely not object to the separation of Church and State. And we are convinced that if such an event should take place, the real strength of the faithful in both the Catholic and the Protestant communions would be increased, although their numerical strength might be, at least temporarily, diminished. The issue of the question will not be unaffected by the influence of LAMARTINE, who is said to be decidedly favorable to a degree of true religious liberty, which Americans consider incompatible with the union of State and Church.

It is proper to close these desultory remarks in connection with the politico-religious tendencies of France, by mentioning the fact that the obsolete law applied to the suppression of the Reform-banquets had already been revived in order to interfere with the right of meeting claimed by a few Baptists in the department of l'Aisne. At the instigation of their persecutors, among whom the most prominent was the bishop of Soissons, their persistence in exercising a right guaranteed to them in common with all Frenchmen by the charter, was visited by trials, fines, and imprisonment. M. ODILON BARROT, afterwards leader in

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the Reform-banquets, who has always been distinguished by his zeal for religious freedom, cordially accepted an invitation to become the legal adviser of the Baptists. On one occasion, at a trial where his engagements prevented him from being present as their advocate, his place was well supplied by M. Henri Lutteroth, who, although not agreeing with their denominational peculiarities, was deeply interested in the principle at stake, and in the constancy with which these humble Christians had suffered to maintain it. The case was decided against them by the higher courts to which it was successively carried. It was still pending, when the Revolution broke forth, the immediate consequence of a struggle for the same principle involved in their case, a struggle provoked by the same law which had been levelled against them. Thus the heroic resistance of a few obscure Baptists to an odious law, was among the proximate causes of hastening an event which other causes had already rendered inevitable.

P. 117—131. Saint-Simon and Fourier have had in France a large number of disciples who, with the Communists, hold one extremity, while the Catholic School holds another, in the field of political, or rather social economy. The Utilitarians, calling themselves practical men *par excellence*, occupy the centre, and with all the credit for respectability and good sense which they claim not altogether unjustly, they sometimes forget that the way to reach even their avowed end is to aim higher and farther than bare utility. Utilitarianism is apt to remain stationary, if not to retrograde; it is content to shut itself up within a too narrow horizon. And it would be difficult to cite a single progressive movement made by it independently of the aid of those whom prudent men, 'wise in their own eyes,' look upon as dreamers or madmen.

The intellectual activity of France has been nowhere more vigorously exercised during late years than in discussing great social questions. An incredible number of books and pamphlets has been occasioned by almost every known or alleged evil, and by almost every proposed reform. Texts have been alternately furnished by prison discipline, colonial slavery, legislative and financial arrangements, pauperism, public education, and especially by that all-absorbing topic from which no political thinker can longer avert his attention—the improvement of the existing relations between what is designated as the laboring portion of the community, and their employers, the question known on the continent under the technical name of the Organization of Labor. The writings on the latter subject which have lately acquired the most importance from the official position of their author, are those of M. Louis Blanc, member of the Provisional Government, and of the present Executive. Those very volumes of M. Louis Blanc, says the Edinburgh Review, (April, 1848) which contain the gravest and most authoritative

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expositions of impossible schemes, display information which any student might envy, and qualifications of which any historian might be proud. An examination of the treatise on *l'Organization du Travail*, in which his views are distinctly unfolded, will be found in the Westminster Review for last April. The newspapers of the day have familiarized all with his recent conduct as President of a Convention summoned to deliberate at the Luxembourg upon this momentous question.

Saint-Simonism, which, during its most flourishing period, attracted the favor of many promising young minds, is now well nigh extinct. The followers of Saint-Simon have either retired to obscurity, or, like M. MICHEL CHEVALIER,* formerly editor of their organ, the *Globe*, whom De Vèricour could not now regard as 'tainted with their peculiar dogmas,' (p. 125) have engaged in less impracticable efforts for the public welfare.

Not a few of those who were originally Saint-Simonians have become attached to Fourierism, which continues to gain adherents, and to deploy much activity. It would be presumptuous to judge of Fourierism in all its details, without a perusal of the works of Fourier himself. But the general impression of unprejudiced observers appears to be that the Fourierists, with many useful and generous ideas, have incorporated certain radical errors into their system, and, perhaps, that their point of departure is not taken from a right understanding of fundamental laws in human nature. It seems probable that some of their projects, if carried into effect, must inevitably interfere so far with the relations between man and man as to compromise individual liberty by introducing organic changes into the constitution of society.

Among the working classes, Communism, the lowest form of French Socialism, has rallied to its standard crowds of converts who are separated into infinite subdivisions under the respective titles of *communistes*

* M. Michel Chevalier, shortly before the overthrow of the late government, lost his professorship at the *Collège de France* in consequence of expressing indignation at the unjust sentence which deprived M. Michelet (whose political opinions were widely different from his own) of his professorship in the same college. M. Chevalier visited this country several years ago, and afterwards published a volume containing some of the results of his intelligent observation upon the state of society, the institutions, the public improvements, and the progress of events, in the United States. He has been a careful observer of what has taken place in this country, since his return to France, as is apparent from frequent publications relating to American affairs, marked with the initials of his name, in the leading daily Journal of Paris. He has lately written a series of articles in that Journal, under his signature, on subjects of political economy, in refutation of the visionary doctrines of Louis Blanc, and the communists. The Boston Daily Advertiser has given several translations from these articles, one of which is designed to show the difference of adaptation to the freest republican institutions, of the state of society in France, and in this country, as an element to be taken into consideration, in the framing of a constitution for the French Republic.

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égalitaires, communionistes, communitaires, communistes-matérialistes, chiénistes, communautistes, solidaire-unis, fraternitaires, and the like. Under these various names, they profess, like others who are inclined to Socialism, all shades of opinion and sentiment, from the dogmas of positive materialism to the impalpable reveries of mysticism. The writings of the Socialists generally present to the uninitiated a strange and gloomy chaos, occasionally illumined, however, by sincere and noble intentions. All honor to pure motives even when eclipsed by error! The extravagant political hopes which may have been excited in the more violent and ambitious communists by the Revolution of February, were diminished by the signal discomfiture of their intrigues in the unsuccessful insurrection of the 15th of May. The events of that day should convince them that the friends of order and real progress are too numerous in France to be overawed by a few adventurous demagogues who, for their own selfish purposes, would deceive the people by false promises. All who avowedly sympathize with the Socialists, of whatever hue, form but an inconsiderable fraction of the thirty-four millions of French citizens. And the claim of half a dozen Communist leaders to represent the wishes and rule the destinies of the nation is both unfounded and ridiculous. The more enlightened among those whom, in this country, we too indiscriminately class together as Socialists, have been grieved at recent attempts to make political capital at all hazards, out of the theories which they have conscientiously adopted.

Briefly, the Socialists of every party and of no party in France have raised many problems which await future solution. They have sown in the public mind many ideas, which amidst tares will yet yield good grain. Without admiring some of the motley peculiarities by which the French Socialists are distinguished, it is right to recognize in their ranks not a few of the most earnest and devoted friends of the human family. Even the dreams of those among them who are not utterly lost in the darkness of infidelity, reflect, however dimly, the light of the purest and highest truth. The beauty of their best conceptions is, as the Germans might call it, a certain after-shine (*Nachshein*) of Christianity.

P. 132—156. MM. Alexis De Tocqueville and Gustave De Beaumont, whose intimacy since their visit to the United States, has been alike creditable to each other and useful to France, are both now members of the National Assembly. M. de Tocqueville is one of the committee appointed to draft a new Constitution. His familiarity with our own system of government will be of essential service to him in performing this responsible duty.

I am not aware that *Marie, ou l'Esclavage,* by M. de Beaumont, has been translated into English; but Mr. Spencer's edition of M. de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America,* translated by Mr. Reeves, is so generally

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known in this country that it is unnecessary to add anything to M. de Véricour's full examination of the work. American readers cannot be expected to agree with all that is said either by De Tocqueville or by our author respecting Democracy, and the people and institutions of the United States. These writers, it must be remembered, are Europeans addressing a European audience. By strangers surveying our country from their own points of view some objects may be misapprehended, while others appear to them in a clearer light than to us. Surely 'however hostile to our preconceived opinions or our prejudices,' the views of a foreigner so intelligent as De Tocqueville are entitled to the candid consideration which they have received here as well as in France.

P. 156. "*The eloquence of the pulpit, in which the French formerly excelled, is now, we may say, completely null.*" This remark, although subject to qualification, is mainly just. The age of Massillon, Bossuet, Bourdalone, and Saurin, has passed away. The distinction, moreover, in the text, between the respective peculiarities of Catholic and of Protestant pulpit oratory is true so far as it relates to France at the present day. The Catholic preachers usually surpass the Protestants in point of style, while the latter exhibit a more logical method and a greater acquaintance with theology than the former.

Among the Catholic preachers, the most distinguished are now MM. Lacordaire, De Ravignan, and De Genoude. The discourses of M. Lacordaire are not so much sermons as extemporaneous effusions, in which patriotic sentiments, historical facts, brilliant thoughts, striking expressions, and frequent references to political affairs, are mingled in strange disorder. His voice, though somewhat shrill, rings clearly on the ear, and his vehement gesticulation strengthens the effect of his forcible appeals. The popularity of the famous Dominican secured for him a seat in the National Assembly, from which, however, as it has been already intimated, he proposes to retire. M. De Ravignan was educated, like M. Lacordaire, to be a lawyer, and had already reached a high position as a magistrate, when he decided to enter the church. He is universally esteemed as a conscientious, enlightened, zealous man. His sermons are more logical than those of Lacordaire, his mode of delivery is more calm but equally impressive, and his style of writing is more didactic, while it does not lack a certain warmth and elegance. He became a Jesuit a few years ago. M. De Genoude, to whose activity in politics allusion has been made, exhibits a similar activity as an ecclesiastic. Perhaps there is not a priest in Paris who has preached more frequently. At an early age he left the Seminary of St. Sulpice where he commenced his preparation for the church. Afterwards, in the prime of his years, he lost by death the lady to whom he had been long married. The nature of

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his severer studies, however, had not been inconsistent with a return to the career for which he was originally destined. Few scholars in France have obtained and communicated more familiarity with Biblical literature than the Abbé de Genoude. M. de Lamartine has said that his own attention was first awakened to the sublimity of the Scriptural poetry by the lyrical books in M. de Genoude's version of the Bible. A volume of sermons, entitled *An Exposition of the Catholic Faith*, is among his more recent publications. While he scrupulously attends to his duties as a priest, he has not, or at least he had not a few months ago, forsaken his accustomed course as a political journalist and orator.

Among Protestant preachers at Paris, those most extensively known are M. ADOLPHE MONOD, who is remarkable for his spirit of earnestness and devotion, M. COQUEREL, his colleague, who has been noticed elsewhere as a member of the National Assembly, and who has just been appointed to the Committee for drafting a Constitution, and M. GRANDPIERRE, whose enthusiasm for the cause of missions has made his name familiar in Great Britain and in this country. Interesting sketches of the preachers of France and French Switzerland will be found in a volume recently published by R. Carter of New York, entitled Pulpit Orators of France and Switzerland, by Rev. Robert Turnbull.

P. 157. NAPOLEON. Reference is made to this page, not with the purpose of enlarging upon the military eloquence of Napoleon, but simply to introduce a curious contemporary notice of the youthful general as a student of Plutarch, and as 'a ready writer.' The following passage is extracted from an old volume picked up on one of the quais in Paris, and entitled *Biographical Anecdotes of the Founders of the French Republic and of other Eminent Characters who have distinguished themselves in the progress of the Revolution.* Lond. 1799. It describes "Napoleone Buonaparte, a hardy Corsican brought up amidst perils, breathing the spirit of the ancient republics, acquainted with all the machinery of modern warfare, directing everything under his own eye,—whose mistress was the commonwealth, and whose companion was Plutarch! But it is not as a General alone that this young hero has distinguished himself. He aspires also after the fame of a Statesman and a Legislator, and wields his pen with the same ease and success as his truncheon."

It is worthy of remark that when the decree of banishment against the Buonapartes was revoked a short time before the late Revolution, several of that family hastened back to France, and three of them, Joachim Murat, Pierre and Napoleon Buonaparte, have been elected to the National Assembly. Notwithstanding the national enthusiasm for the memory of the Emperor, probably none of his relatives will exercise a great controlling influence over affairs, without possessing his genius as

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well as the prestige of his name. Recent speeches in the Assembly by M. NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE, on the Polish question, and especially against the decree banishing the family of Louis Phillippe, seem however to have indicated that the name which became omnipotent by force of arms under the first Republic, may yet become mighty by force of eloquence under the second.

P. 166. M. ROYER COLLARD, whose death has taken place since the publication of this treatise, was born in 1763, and began his career as an advocate in the French Parliament. His exemplary private life, his consistency and integrity as a politician, and the impulse which his example gave to the study of philosophy in France, won for him the respect of all parties. It was said of him that he was, under the late reign, the first to introduce philosophical principles of government in France, and that he gave to the present generation of statesmen their political education.

P. 167. M. THIERS, as the preceding note intimates, was summoned on the last day of the reign of Louis Philippe to construct a Ministry which should prop the tottering throne, and stay the violence of the people. For the fourth time this gifted but unscrupulous statesman found himself at the head of affairs. Within less than twenty-four hours, however, the King who had conferred and the Minister who had received an empty honor, were swept away from their high places by the rapid and irresistible course of events. M. Thiers has since been an unsuccessful candidate for the National Assembly, although he may probably be elected ere long to fill some vacancy occasioned by the custom of returning the same member from several constituences, which must each be separately represented. His present political position may be inferred from his announcement of a work which he will shortly publish under the following title: *De la Constitution—De la Situation—De l'Avenir.* "In this manifesto, it is said M. Thiers explicitly declares that he was always an ardent partisan of constitutional monarchy, as the form of government best suited to guarantee liberty and prosperity to the French people; but that if anything were wanting to give increased strength to that conviction, all that has taken place in France since the 25th of February has most amply supplied it. In a word, M. Thiers will proclaim himself a more ardent advocate than ever of a system of constitutional monarchy; not such a system, indeed, as that established since the revolution of July, but one in which the sovereign would leave the real direction of the affairs of the country to responsible ministers, and would be completely excluded from that interference and meddling which has cost Louis Philippe his throne." Should a possible although improbable reaction in favor of the Orleans dynasty take place, M. Thiers may yet wield great influence in France.

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P. 169. The Opposition Party in the Late Chamber of Deputies has here furnished to our author the text of a paragraph which by its prophetic sense cannot fail to strike the attention of the reader. The prediction which it utters is now partially fulfilled. 'An imprudence on the part of the crown' has been 'followed by a republic.' The steady opposition of the republican party, through the press, at the tribune, and the reform-banquets, against the selfish policy of Louis Philippe, has co-operated with the vices and errors of government, and with the accumulating forces of public opinion, to produce the Revolution of 1848. The phrase *le roi règne et ne gouverne pas* is so well known to have involved an idle distinction, that it is not unjust to throw at least a part of the responsibility attached to the recent administration, upon the ex-king of the French. His attacks upon the liberty of the press and the right of meeting, his shortsighted encouragement of financial speculations, which would inevitably plunge the nation, sooner or later, into bankruptcy, his connivance at a corrupt political system which ruled France by purchased majorities, his alleged readiness, for the sake of alliance with despotic powers, to sacrifice the national honor, and the interests of liberty in those countries which looked to France for sympathy and aid in their resistance to tyranny; in fine, the apparent avidity with which, throughout his whole policy, domestic and foreign, he sought to enrich and aggrandize himself and his family, tended to hasten the hour which should put a period to his sway. The fatal hour at length arrived. He has been deposed and cast out from the throne which he promised, eighteen years ago, to surround with republican institutions, and which, on the contrary, he has labored to render despotic and absolute.*

It may not be improper to add to this brief statement of our views respecting Louis Philippe as a politician and a prince, that we could not consistently join in the universal expressions of satisfaction elicited by his overthrow, if we had ever echoed the unmerited applauses which, during the plenitude of his power, he received from both sides of the Atlantic. We heartily despise the meanness of those among his ancient flatterers who are now loudest in reviling a fallen dignity. They should pause in silence, if not with commiseration, while contemplating so sudden and awful a descent from one of the loftiest pinnacles of earthly grandeur. But we never assented to the fulsome praises which used to be ignorantly lavished in England and in the United States, upon the monarch who has been dethroned. The history of his early vicissitudes

* "*The Rise and Fall of Louis Philippe*" is announced by Messrs. Ticknor & Co. as the title of a work which will shortly appear from the pen of Ben Perley Poore, Esq. The reputation of Mr. Poore as a popular writer, and his unusual opportunities, during a prolonged residence at Paris, for deriving information from the nearest and best sources, warrant us to expect from him an interesting and valuable volume.

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has always affected us with peculiar interest; we cherish a sincere respect for his private virtues as a son, a brother, a husband, a father, for his urbanity of manners, for the wonderful variety and extent of his knowledge, for his superior talents; but neither our admiration of his excellent personal qualities, nor our sympathy with the trials of his youth, can alter in the least a conviction reluctantly forced upon us, that his heart is false to his original profession of those liberal principles which for years it seems to have been his object to subvert. This conviction led us to anticipate the results which have already taken place. It once occurred to us with such force, even amidst the gayety and splendor of a court ball, that we thought De Salvandy, the Minister of Public Instruction, who was at the moment conversing with the king, might have safely repeated his famous exclamation which long before, in a similar scene, had caught the ear of the Duke of Orleans—*Nous dansons sur un volcan!*

We have already alluded to GUIZOT, whose fall was involved with that of Louis Philippe. The prohibition of the metropolitan reform-banquet was insisted upon by the latter and consented to by the former. Both shared in the responsibility and in the consequences. The ex-minister, in this final instance of subjecting his high intellect to the exigencies of a meaner one, filled to the brim the measure of his previous political errors. He thus completed the forfeiture of that noble fame as a statesman, which, until he was tricked into becoming the tool of a royal master, the gravity of his character, so unusual among Frenchmen, his profound learning, impressive eloquence, and unimpeachable integrity, had won for him, shedding additional lustre upon his fame as an immortal historian.

The Revolution of February wresting from the treacherous hands of Louis Philippe the authority which the Revolution of July had conferred upon him, entrusted it to a PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. The members of that Government, whatever exception may be taken against some of their individual opinions, or some of their acts, deserve the admiration of the world for the skill and courage with which, under the most difficult circumstances, they guided, for two months, (from 24th February to 3d May,) the destinies of France.

At the Hotel de Ville, on the 24th of February, the first act of those who had reached the head of affairs was the fusion of two lists of rulers. These lists had arrived at the Hotel together, the one from the Chamber of Deputies, the other from the office of a journal, *La Réforme*. The first was composed of seven deputies—DUPONT (de l'Eure,) LAMARTINE, CREMIEUX, ARAGO, LEDRU-ROLLIN, GARNIER-PAGES, and MARIE. The other presented the names of ARAGO, LOUIS BLANC, MARIE, LAMARTINE, FLOCON, LEDRU-ROLLIN, RECURT, MARRAST and ALBERT. The names of Lamartine, Arago, Ledru-Rollin, and Marie, it is per-

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ceived, were on both lists. A compromise was indispensable in order to prevent a public schism, and every name, except that of Recurt, (who was appointed to a subordinate office, and has since figured as President of the Committee of Elections, and Member of the National Assembly,) appears on the list which was finally announced to the people. At first, Louis Blanc, Marrast, Flocon, and Albert signed only as Secretaries, but very soon as integral and equal Members of the Provisional Government. Neither full biographical notices of the Members of the Provisional Government, nor a history of their official acts, can be expected in a note like the present. But it may not be improper to add a word respecting each of these personages.

The venerable DUPONT, who was nominally honored with the highest place in the Provisional Government, acquired, more than fifty years ago, by his uprightness and integrity as a magistrate, the appellation of 'the French Aristides.' He owed the office of magistrate to his sympathy with republican sentiments in 1792, and his whole life has been a consistent commentary upon the opinions avowed by him after the second abdication of Napoleon, 'that France ought never to recognize any government which shall not guarantee, by institutions freely accepted, equality before the law, individual liberty, liberty of the press and of worship, a representative government, the jury, the abolition of all hereditary nobility, the inviolability of the public domains, and all the grand results of the revolution.' The calm experience of the sage justifies the convictions of the youthful enthusiast, and Dupont has been true, in the third revolution, to the principles which he advocated in the first and the second.

CREMIEUX is one of the celebrities of the Parisian bar, where his voice has always been raised in favor of the oppressed. In society, his musical tastes and his generous patronage of artists, have united with his courteous manners to render him popular. Politically, he has long been a decided liberalist.

MARIE is also a famous lawyer. Shortly after the Spanish marriages, he successfully defended the *National*, when that journal was prosecuted for an alleged offence against the political inviolability of the king. The main question involved in that trial was, whether in the press, as in the parliament, the great problems of personal government and of royal prerogative, can be freely discussed. The jury appeared to agree with the eloquent advocate, that the right of discussion is one of the most sacred of constitutional principles, for the editor of the *National* was acquitted.

GARNIER-PAGES is one of two brothers by different fathers. The name of the elder brother was Garnier, and that of the younger Pagès, which they combined into Garnier-Pagès. The elder brother, attracting great attention by his republican opinions, was elected to the Chamber, and took his seat on the same day (2d of January, 1832) on which Armand

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Carrel hoisted the Republican Flag in the *National*. Two of his earliest speeches as deputy were so remarkable for their clear and vigorous style, and for their display of a profound knowledge of the principles of political economy and the details of finance, as to cause his adversaries to call him, half in jest, half in earnest, 'a young man of exceeding promise! *the future minister of finance for the democracy!*' He was applauded, even by those who differed from him in opinion, for 'his rare moral courage.' Simple in manners, consistent, sincere, disinterested, generous, inoffensive, he is pronounced by De Cormenin to have been 'a severe, but not extravagant democrat.' He died in 1843, when his younger brother succeeded to his place in the party. The character and abilities of the latter resemble so closely those of the former, that none are surprised to see him holding the difficult and honorable position of Minister of Finance—the position to which his brother had apparently been destined.

LEDRU-ROLLIN, as member of the late Chamber of Deputies, sat on the extreme left, and defended with vehemence the ultra-democratic opinions of *La Reforme* against the policy not only of Guizot, but also of Thiers and Odilon Barrot. He is a lawyer by profession. During the summer of O'Connel's monster meetings in Ireland, he paid a visit to that country, and was pointed out to the Irish populace at Tara as a delegate from the Republicans of France. Many American abolitionists may remember that he was present and spoke at the "World's Convention," held in May, the same year, at London. Winter before last, he made the Chamber ring with his denunciations against the Ministry, for continuing to countenance the horrors of colonial slavery. Although rash and inclined to be violent, his intentions are doubtless sincerely patriotic. His zeal is probably honest, even when it outruns his discretion. This may be the opinion of Lamartine who has hazarded his own popularity by defending his colleague against unjust suspicions, and by exerting himself to retain him in office. On the 15th of May, when the unsuccessful insurrection of conspirators like Barbès and Blanqui happily failed to reduce the State to anarchy, Ledru-Rollin accompanied Lamartine to the Place de l'Hotel de Ville, where both exhibited their loyalty to the cause of order and true liberty.

FERDINAND FLOCON is a journalist, who has been described as 'an ultra-democrat and a socialist in the sense of uniting labor and capital.' During the late reign, he was subjected to numerous fines and long visits to prisons, on account of his connection with several republican *émeutes*, and with certain seditious publications. When the Revolution broke out, he was the editor of *La Reforme*, at the office of which the members of the rival Provisional Government, alluded to on another page, were, we may say, self-elected.

ALBERT, who, since the Revolution, has been in the habit of attaching to his signature the title of *Ouvrier*, *Workman*, can lay no other claim

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to it, we believe, than that he was at one time the manager, perhaps the proprietor, of an immense workshop or manufactory. He is, it appears, the identical M. Albert, 'who figures prominently in republican history; who aided to hatch the insurrection in Lyons, in 1834; who lent 'his fortune' to the establishment of a republican journal, *La Glaneuse*, in that city; who was the ambassador between Lyons and Paris; who surrendered himself to share the arrest of his friends; and who answered the interrogations of the judges 'with calm and dignified contempt.' However sincere may have been the attachment of M. Albert to republican principles, he seems, by adopting a title which could scarcely be accorded to him with justice, to have betrayed a desire to produce for effect a wrong impression on the public mind. The issue of the conspiracy of the 15th of May, in which he was doubtless involved, has consigned him to the dungeons of Vincennes, and his memory to a doubtful fame.

ARMAND MARRAST, as editor of the *National*, which was founded in 1828 by M. Thiers, with Armand Carrel and the more enthusiastic of the revolutionary party, maintained the reputation of that paper as one of the ablest political journals in Europe. His clear head, energetic style, broad and enlarged sympathies, peculiarly qualified him for the position which he held as a journalist. When the Revolution broke forth, his undoubted talents and his constant attachment to republican principles, pointed him out as entitled to a seat in the Provisional Government. M. Marrast, by the way, was one of the champions of the liberal party in that famous duel which resulted from the political excitements of 1833, and presented the spectacle of "ten gentlemen of the press stripped to their shirts, and sword in hand, thrusting quart and tierce up to their knees in snow, in a quarrel respecting the virtue of the Duchesse de Berri." Notwithstanding his share in that singular exhibition of pugnacity, M. Marrast has for a long time uniformly advocated the pacific course which, since his accession to power, he has shown a disposition to follow. He probably represents the will of the more enlightened and judicious portion of the republican party in France. A very interesting note to an article in the Democratic Review for April 1848, on the French Revolution, contains the substance of a conversation held with M. Marrast about a year before that event, by Henry Wikoff, Esq. of New York, "than whom," says the Review, "no American has enjoyed greater facilities for information relative to the politics of France, or is more capable of fully apprehending them." Two expressions only need be quoted here from this conversation, to show the views of the party represented by M. Marrast:— "You ask me, in proof of our intentions and desires, what would be the first words of the *National*, should any *event* occur that would disturb the present tranquillity of the country? *l'Ordre et la France*, I reply, without hesitation, *and come when that event may, no one will be more strenuous than ourselves in supporting the public security*." .... You demand what is

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our fundamental doctrine as to government? We have but one, and that is unchangeable—a republic, which we think, from constant observation, is the only one really compatible with the French character." These declarations, which have not been falsified by late occurrences, afford a guarantee for the future security of France, so far as it shall depend on those who share the opinions and sentiments of M. Marrast.

Arago, unquestionably the most eminent man of science in Europe, requires only a brief notice here, for his claims to renown are familiar to all. It is a remarkable circumstance that not a single book has been exclusively prepared for publication by this great astronomer and mathematician, who has nevertheless written innumerable articles and mémoires, and more largely contributed, directly and indirectly, to promote the interests of science than perhaps any other savant of the age. For instance, Leverrier, whose name is now universally known, was induced by him to enter upon those astonishing calculations which, in 1847, resulted in the discovery of a new planet—not indeed (as our distinguished countryman, Professor Pierce of Cambridge, has conclusively shown) of the planet to which geometrical analysis had directed the telescope, but still of one with which the fame of Leverrier will forever be associated.

Dominique François Jean Arago was born at Estagel, near Perpignan, on the 25th of February, 1786. His extraordinary abilities were manifested and rewarded at an early period in his life. Sent by the emperor on an important scientific mission, with Biot, into Spain, (to measure the arc of the terrestrial meridian,) he met with a variety of adventures no less surprising than his researches; and at length regaining France, after having been captured and carried as a slave to Algiers, he was, despite the rules, elected a member of the Academy of Sciences when but twenty-three years old. On this account, Napoleon appointed him to a professorship in the Polytechnic School. He has since acquired the highest distinctions attainable in France, and scarcely a learned society in the world is not proud to have enrolled him among its members. Elected, in 1831, a deputy from Perpignan, he at once took the position which has rendered him as well known for his democratic tendencies, as for his learning and mental capacities. His wonderful powers of analysis enable him, as Secretary of the Institute, to exhibit the salient points of the mass of scientific facts and theories perpetually accumulating in the memoirs of that learned body. In his hands, the dark chaos of materials becomes luminous like the sun. In the late Chamber of Deputies, he displayed the same rare faculty of demonstrating his subject, whatever it might be, so clearly that the most ignorant were equally charmed and astonished to comprehend it. Whenever his tall and majestic form rose at the tribune, his magnificent head, characteristic as that of Webster, and revealing, even in the muscular contraction of the temples, the force of will and thought belonging to a superior intellect, imposed silence up-

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on the assembly. All parties did homage to the genius of the eloquent republican.

While entering, last summer, *le jardin du Luxembourg*, by the gate opposite the Observatory, with which Arago has been so long and honorably connected, we accidentally met the illustrious astronomer. After he had bowed and passed on, our companion, one of his admirers and friends, and himself not unknown in the scientific world, exclaimed, "there is a man who, dissatisfied with his reputation as a savant, aspires, and is capable of ascending, to the highest political station. He does not despair of finding himself, *perhaps very soon*, at the head of affairs in France. When that hour comes, science may mourn, but the State will have cause to rejoice." Part of the prediction has been fulfilled; let us hope that the rest may not prove untrue.

Louis Blanc must have exulted in that proud moment of his life, when, on the 25th of February, at his appearance upon the steps of the Hotel de Ville, the patriotic shouts and songs of the thousands assembled around that revolutionary centre of France suddenly ceased, and amidst profound silence, to be broken only by a full chorus of applause, he announced a republic. As a writer, he had contended, even from his boyhood, for the principles whose hour of victory seemed now to have arrived. The publication of his chief work, *l'Histoire de Dix Ans*, was itself an event of historical importance, as a prognostic, and, in no small measure, a cause of events which have lately raised him and his friends to the first rank in the state.

Jean Joseph Louis Blanc was born on the 28th of October 1813, at Madrid, where his father was then residing as inspector-general of finances at the court of king Joseph Bonaparte. The mother of M. Louis Blanc was a Corsican by birth. His paternal grandfather, who belonged to a highly respectable family of Rouergue, perished on the scaffold at Paris during the Reign of Terror, when fortune and merit were sufficient warrant for condemnation. His father who also shared the perils of that period, escaping from prison, was fortunate enough to avoid any further collisions with the revolutionists, and after having been attached to the administration, during the empire, settled in Paris, when the thrones erected by Napoleon for his brothers had fallen. M. Louis Blanc was educated at the Royal College of Rodez, and came to Paris in 1830. His interest had already been excited in the question of social reform, and at eighteen years of age he began his career as a radical writer in the daily journals. Three prizes which he gained at this time from the Academy of Arras for a piece of verse *sur l'Hôtel des Invalides*, a poem, *Mirabeau*, in four hundred and twenty-three lines of unequal metre, and *l'Eloge de Manuel*, in prose, facilitated his connection with the democratic periodicals. Besides contributing regularly to the columns of the *National*, he took part in editing *la Revue républicaine, jour-*

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nal des doctrines et des interets democratiques, which was suppressed by the laws of September 1835. On the first of January 1836, he became the principal editor of the *Bon Sens*, and on the 15th of January 1838, he issued the first number of *la Revue du progrès politique, social et littéraire*, a review established by himself, and conducted by him with such "powerful energy," says the author of the present treatise, that "it has drawn the attention of the French public by the strong democratic principles it upholds, the bold tenets it has avowed in the face of the world, and the host of superior men who co-operate in its publication." One of his writings in this review, an article on *l'Organization du travail*, was printed separately in 1840, and after passing quietly through several editions, has aroused universal attention since the events of February by the increased importance which it has acquired from its author's official position, from his desire and facilities, as member of the Provisional Government, and President of the Labor Convention at the Luxembourg, for attempting to reduce his benevolent but extravagant theories to practice. It is well known that several of the colleagues of M. Louis Blanc, although they acknowledge the existence of social evils which are tacitly recognized everywhere, are far from sharing in his peculiar views. The majority of the National Assembly, representing in this respect, at least, the majority of the nation, are bitterly, as well as to a certain extent, reasonably opposed to his views; with which, on the other hand, some of the authors of the abortive insurrection of the 15th of May cordially sympathize. The accusation of his having been implicated in that conspiracy, appears to rest mainly on this concurrence of circumstances. Time only can reveal the facts of the case, but, really, from the earnestness and boldness with which M. Louis Blanc has defended himself at the tribune, it would seem that his character for sincerity ought not to suffer from the imputations cast upon it by the malignity of enemies, or through the injudicious zeal of friends. Notwithstanding his error in hoping to introduce sudden organic changes in the relations of society, the energy and perseverance of M. Louis Blanc, and his rare combination of learning with mental independence, may yet render great service to France. "Cured by experience of Utopianism," declares a contemporary, "he will be a useful man to the revolution."

LAMARTINE is, preëminently, the hero of the Third French Revolution. It would be superfluous to describe the eloquence, courage, and wisdom with which he has saved his country from anarchy and bloodshed. The world is familiar with his part in the mighty drama which has not yet reached its final act.

Let us glance, however, at a few of those majestic attitudes in which he has appeared since the 24th of February.

On that memorable day, his voice was heard above the tumult in the Chamber. He expressed the feelings inspired by a spectacle well fitted

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to move a poet and historian—that of a Princess coming forward with her innocent son, after having left her deserted palace, to place herself under the protection of a nation; he expressed also his admiration of a people who had fought during two days against a perfidious Government for the purpose of re-establishing order and liberty; he insisted upon boldly sounding the mystery of the right of nations, and proposed the formation of a government not definite, but provisional—a government to be charged, first of all, with the task of staunching the blood which was then flowing, of putting a stop to civil war,—a government, on which the duty be imposed of convoking and consulting the people, the entire people,—all that possess in their title of man, the right of a citizen.

At the Hotel de Ville, on the following day, he rose five times, sublime as the Neptune of Virgil, to assuage the tempest of popular fury.* The early proclamations of the Provisional Government bore the impress of his mind. In his official announcement of the Republic, he declared the abolition of the penalty of death in political matters—'the noblest decree that ever issued from the mouths of a people the day after their victory.' The circular sent out by him as Minister of Foreign Affairs, is a masterpiece, conceived in a higher spirit than any other similar document, and, with its motto of LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY, revealing the firm, frank and moderate policy which he wished the agents of the Republic to represent. When the Provisional Government were about to retire from their exalted and responsible position, he addressed to the nation, in their behalf, a farewell, the substance of which, residing in these words—*Soyez unis—nôtre République vivra par la concorde, par la fraternité: point de réaction, point de violence!*—teaches the same impressive lesson as the farewell address of our own Washington. On the 6th of May, taking the place for which the advanced age of M. Dupont (de l'Eure) incapacitated the nominal head of the Provisional Government, he read to the assembly a magnificent page of history, such as only his pen could have written, recounting briefly the acts of government, and, in view of the unparalled success that had attended the efforts of the young Republic, ascribing all honor to God and to the people, in a peroration which is no less dignified than it is modest

* The Mantuan bard could not have delineated with more fidelity the charms of eloquence soothing an enraged populace, had he even foreseen that a poet of kindred genius would hereafter realize the picture:

> Magno in populo cum sæpe coorta est
> Seditio, sævitque animis ignobile vulgus;
> Jamque faces et saxa volant; furor arma ministrat:
> Tum, pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem
> Conspexere, silent: arrectisque auribus adstant;
> Ille regit dictis animos, et pectora mulcet.
>
> *Æn.* I. 148—153.

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and devout.* On the 15th of May, when the audacity of a few conspirators had so far endangered the state as to dissolve for a moment the National Assembly, he displayed an energy and firmness equal to his previous spirit of patience and conciliation. Hastening on horseback to the Place de l'Hotel de Ville, before the insurgents had fairly mastered that decisive point, by the possession of which France is more than half conquered, he raised himself in his stirrups, and made one of those brief, thrilling utterances that tell with prodigious effect in crises when elaborate orations would be useless even if they were possible. He saved his country, a second time, from the horrors of civil war. Among the speeches delivered by him in the National Assembly, none has surpassed that by which, in connection with the affairs of Poland and Italy, he vindicated the foreign policy of the Provisional Government; demonstrating that the spread of liberal principles will accomplish more than any appeal to arms, and that the time has passed when general peace would have been an Utopian idea. This discourse was a worthy companion piece of his brilliant manifesto, in February, which impressed so profound a conviction of his justness and excellence, and inspired such high hopes for the future of France.

But why should we dwell longer on these feats of eloquence which are more truly heroic than the deeds of conquerors? Every oration of Lamartine, since the 24th of February, has been at once a battle and a victory. He

> joins head, heart and hand
> Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
> Of Science, Freedom and the Truth in Christ.

His struggles for liberty and order have been witnessed by a greater multitude of spectators than ever before gathered around a contemporaneous scene in history. No other orator has addressed so vast an audience. The means which modern science is daily multiplying for the transmission of thought, have infinitely widened the sphere of his immediate influence. The very lightning of heaven has caught his falling words, and borne them over two continents to the remotest bounds of earth.

Allusion has here been made to this splendid series of his discourses, chiefly because they are pervaded by one leading principle—the princi-

* Nous ne demandons, pour toute ambition, qu'a rentrer dans les rangs des bons citoyens. Puisse, seulement, l'histoire de notre chère patrie inscrire avec indulgence, au dessous, et bien loin des grandes choses faites par la France, le récit de ces trois mois passés sur le vide, entre une monarchie écroulée et une république à asseoir, et puisse-t-elle, au lieu des noms obscurs et oubliés des hommes qui se sont dévoués au salut commun, inscrire dans ses pages deux noms seulement : le nom du peuple qui a tout sauvé, et le nom de Dieu qui a tout béni sur les fondemens de la République !

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ple of what he styles Gospel Politics—'peace on earth and good will to man.'

This principle, we think, has given to the political life of Lamartine an inward unity, which is no wise violated by his occasional preferences for the measures of different parties. It is true that he has been carried by the rapid progress of events, from the legitimacy supported by Berryer, beyond the conservative policy of Guizot, and the partial reforms of Odilon Barrot. He favored some of their opinions which chanced to coincide with his own. He never withheld his sympathy from truth wherever she chose to appear, or wherever he was led to seek for her. Blindly attached to no party, he has been accused of inconstancy only because he is too independent to be governed by party rules. He has never wavered in his devotion to the lofty and generous principles proclaimed by him upon entering his political career, and foretokened by many singular passages in his *Voyage en Orient*. That work has been called a moving panorama, in which the historic scenes, and azure skies, and placid seas, and glowing sunsets of the east, are portrayed in all their native brilliancy, and in richer even than their native colors. But if it enchants by its descriptions of scenery, it presents a stronger charm as containing the germs of those political and social ideas which blossomed under the late Reign, and have been ripened into fruit by the Revolution of February and a Republic.

On the 4th of January 1834, Lamartine made his first appearance in the Chamber. For sometime afterwards, his poetical fame interfered with his success at the tribune. His high forehead and expressive eye were, like his peculiarly glowing style, so eloquent of the poet, that practical politicians were suspicious of the sentiments which fell from his lips. They admired without sharing his chivalrous ardor in opposing the penalty of death. They thought that he had hit upon a topic for which his powers were best adapted, when, in a celebrated impromptu speech, he defended classical studies against the attacks of Arago, the able champion of scientific pursuits.* The elevated point from which he surveyed public affairs was beyond their reach, and therefore, either unseen or misapprehended. But they were soon convinced of his growing importance as a politician. 'On all questions relative to the East he displayed an intimate acquaintance with the diplomacy exercised, the actual position of men and things, and frequently developed his views, based on a new system of policy, which he urged upon the cabinets of Europe.' Without losing his interest in those discussions on social economy which had placed him at the head of a party—*le Parti Social*—gradually form-

* Abstracts of the speeches of Arago and Lamartine on that occasion are given in 'Passages from Foreign Travel, by Isaac Appleton Jewett'—one of the best among those innumerable volumes which Americans returning from Europe have felt obliged to publish.

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ed in the Chamber under his auspices, he grappled boldly with the most practical and urgent questions of the day. At the epoch of the revolution he had established a reputation as an efficient, as well as brilliant and graceful parliamentary orator. Since that epoch, his political capacity has become the wonder of the age.

Several biographical facts concerning Lamartine are stated by M. de Vèricour. We regret that he does not show his usual penetration of judgement in estimating the character which the poet had already exhibited as a politician. The criticisms upon his character as a poet, although they may be considered severe, are not unfounded; the verse of Lamartine is generally less distinguished for strength, than for purity and grace. In a preface to his *Recueillements Poétiques*, published subsequently to *La Chute d'un Ange* (which is mentioned in the text, written in 1841, as his latest production), the illustrious writer decries poetry 'when it is made more than the relaxation of busy life; pitying those who make it the sole occupation of existence, then idle and useless, because social labor is the daily and obligatory duty of every man whose lot is cast in with the perils and benefits of society.' But surely the true poet may do no small share of 'social labor' by employing his rare gifts; and Lamartine has been reproached for undervaluing the art by which he won his earlier celebrity, an essential element of the power now wielded by his name. In his own case, indeed, the poet has been successively outshone by the historian, the orator and the legislator. His highest and most permanent fame will rest upon his recent services to France, and to mankind. For his signal opportunity in the Revolution to render those services, he is partly indebted to the success of his *Histoire des Girondins*. This work (which will demand more special notice elsewhere) exciting universal enthusiasm by its political tendencies, the splendor of its diction, and its wonderful blending of the poetry with the philosophy of history, marked out its author for the position which he has since held. Another extraordinary work, attributed to Lamartine, has doubtless served the same purpose. We refer to a small volume, published anonymously in 1843, and reprinted with his name on the 1st of December 1847, entitled *France and England, or a Vision of the Future*. The vision is that of a young Frenchman, who, while under the influence of *haschish*, an intoxicating drug of the East, sees what the world is to be a hundred years hence. 'He need not,' says the London Quarterly Review (March, 1848), 'have taken so long a period, for much of his prophecy has been accomplished within five.' This strange volume, predicting, five years ago, all the great events which have lately occurred in France, and many which may yet occur, uttered nearly all the principles and opinions which have been adopted by the Provisional Government. Lamartine himself, if really the author of the book, seems to have acquired the prophetic sense of Lady Hester Stanhope, who, in a

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conversation with him amidst the solitude of one of the mountains of Lebanon, in 1832, foretold that he would 'participate in a great mission which France was destined yet to fulfil.'* The astrologers would be fortunate if all their predictions were verified like those relating to Lamartine.

Not long previous to the Revolution of February, the public learned with pleasure that the author of *l'Histoire des Girondins* was engaged in preparing *l'Histoire des Constituants*. It was informed, moreover, that not content with his triple renown as poet, orator and historian, Lamartine had made an excursion into the rich domain of romance, and that a genuine *roman de poète* would soon appear under the title of *Raphael*. The *Confidences*, an autobiography, to which the most brilliant chapter can now be appended, had also been announced as ready for the press. In short, just before the Revolution broke forth, Lamartine had developed an amazing fertility of genius. The apparent prodigality of his mental wealth in every direction might have been unaccountable, and even ominous of speedy exhaustion, if he had not been known as one of those superior intellects whose forces are perpetually renewed from an unfailing source, by simple obedience to the precept, "LOOK IN THINE HEART, AND WRITE!"

The literary projects of Lamartine were interrupted by the Revolution. But his faculties have found ample exercise in the glorious task to which Providence summoned him by that event. He has obeyed a higher precept—"LOOK IN THINE HEART, AND ACT!"

The impulse which he has thus given to France must affect the destinies of surrounding nations. Lamartine will be remembered as the Washington of Europe!

The preceding sketches have been prepared for this place, not only because public curiosity has collected around the Members of the Provisional Government, but also because these personages embodied, to a large extent, the Political Tendencies of Modern French Literature. The Provisional Government contained scarcely an individual whose connection, direct or indirect, with literature, was not an element in his claim to political distinction. With two or three exceptions, their number was composed of poets, historians, and journalists.† Belonging, as

* This curious prediction of Lady Hester Stanhope will be found in the *Voyage en Orient*, I. p. 250.

† It is a circumstance highly significant of the intimate relations between politics and the press in France, that of the original lists for members of the Provisional Government, one was entirely formed at the office of a Parisian journal, *La Réforme*. Two writers attached to that journal played a most conspicuous part in the initiative of the Revolution; one of them, M. Etienne Arago, seizing the control of the Post Office, and the other, M. Marc Caussidière, the Prefecture of Police. Both have since been elected to the National Assembly, and M. Caussidière, until his

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a whole, to the general party of reform and progress, they represented, individually, the diversities of sentiment and opinion prevailing in that party. Thus, for instance, Louis Blanc might have been tempted to accept even anarchy, if at that price he could hope to reconstruct society according to his benevolent although visionary theories: but Dupont (de l'Eure) differed so widely from his colleague in predilections as well as in age, as to oppose his schemes by an apothegm which, in spirit and form, is not unworthy of Franklin—"*Pas si vite! pas si vite, faiseurs de théories! La perfection d'une pendule n'est pas d'aller vite, mais d'être réglée* —Not so fast! Not so fast, framers of theories! The perfection of a clock is not in going fast, but in being well regulated." While far above either Dupont or Louis Blanc stood Lamartine, whose comprehensive genius was capable of divining and harmonizing the truths involved in the conservatism of the one and the radicalism of the other. Lamartine, from his exalted rank in the political and the literary world, has naturally received in these pages a larger share of attention than his associates.

On the 4th of May, the National Assembly held its first session. The Provisional Government did not delay transferring to the representatives of the people those vast powers with which they had themselves been entrusted by the people in February. Their conduct during the perils of the intervening months, was rewarded by the decree—*Ils ont bien mérité de la Patrie.* On the 10th of May, Arago, Garnier Pagès, Marie, Lamartine, and Ledru-Rollin were invested, by the votes of the Assembly, with temporary executive power, under the title of *Comité Executif Intérimaire.* The Assembly have since pursued their deliberations with only one interruption. But this was of so important a nature that it must be mentioned. On the 15th of May, the Hall in which they meet was invaded by a mob led on by armed conspirators, who forcibly dissolved the Assembly, and proclaiming a dictatorship, a tax to be levied on the rich in behalf of Poland, and the guillotine, would have brought back the Reign of Terror, had not the insurrection been speedily quelled by the energy of the Executive and the loyalty of the Parisians to the representatives of the sovereign People. On this occasion, Lamartine regained, by his decision, the partial loss of popularity which he had suffered from his conciliatory spirit in defending Ledru-Rollin. The latter also justified the impression created in his favor by Lamartine, accompanying him to the Place de l'Hotel de Ville, and aiding him to arrest the seditious movement of Barbès. Within an hour order was restored, and the Assembly resumed their seats. History offers no parallel in-

conduct on the 15th of May caused him to be suspected of collusion with the conspirators, whose plans were then defeated, retained his position as Prefect. An interesting account of the scene at the office of *La Réforme* on the 24th of February is given in the Three Days of February, 1848, by P. B. St. John, p. 182.

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stance of a government overthrown and re-instated without effusion of blood, in the same day. This happy issue out of the dangers which threatened to overwhelm the State, has invigorated the hopes of all who desire that the experiment of a Republic in France may be successful. The Assembly, although it could not but recognize the Republic which, as Lamartine ingeniously said, 'had proclaimed itself'—*Nous ne proclamâmes pas la République, elle s'était proclamée elle-même par la bouche de tout un peuple*—and although its members had been elected by universal suffrage,* presented, nevertheless, a more conservative aspect than had been anticipated. Until the 15th of May, the representatives manifested less confidence in the Executive Committee than it was entitled to receive. But they have since rallied around it with greater unanimity. They are now prosecuting their labors with increased zeal. Several of the most enlightened men in France have been appointed by them to draft a Constitution. And all good citizens are ready to co-operate with their delegates in establishing order and liberty upon a firm basis.

It is impossible to predict with certainty the fate of the French Republic. But it has gallantly outrode storms as violent as can be dreaded in the future. It seems already to be sailing through smoother seas and beneath more smiling skies. And we may safely repeat—as far more appropriate to the rulers of France under the Republic, than to those under the late Reign—the language with which M. de Véricour concludes his second chapter on Political Tendencies: "There is every reason to hope, that those who steer the vessel of the State are now made aware that the grandeur and futurity of a nation depend wholly on a social education founded on religion, on a just and humane organization of industry and labor, under the balmy and fecund influence of rational freedom." If the French legislators forget or disregard these principles, it will be their own fault, for these are the lessons most impressively taught by the Third French Revolution.

P. 172. CRITICAL LITERATURE has been so extensively cultivated in France that the names of writers who have labored in it with success

* The reader may be interested by the following statistics of the Assembly. It counts among its members 99 advocates, 51 government-agents, 47 magistrates, 25 physicians, 21 workmen, 3 bishops, 12 priests, and 1 protestant pastor; 14 generals, 2 admirals; 18 farmers, 21 publicists and editors of journals, 11 notaries or ex-notaries, 6 members of the Institute, 4 dramatic authors, 4 colonels, 1 druggist, 1 tavern-keeper, 1 confectioner, 1 school-master, 1 baker, 1 street-porter, 2 sons of kings (Napoléon Bonaparte, son of Jerome, and L. Murat, son of Joachim Murat), 1 nephew of an emperor (Pierre Napoléon Bonaparte, son of Lucien).

The Americans will be glad to learn that the family of the Friend of Washington is well represented in the National Assembly. George W., son, Edmond and Oscar Lafayette, grandsons of *l'Homme de Deux Mondes*, as he is styled by the French—Jules de Lasteyrie, also his grandson—Messrs. Corcelles and De Rémusat, sons-in-law of Mme. de Lasteyrie, his daughter—and M. de Tracy, brother-in-law of George Washington Lafayette, are all members of the Assembly.

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might fill a volume. But the large space in these pages which has been claimed, on account of the late Revolution, by the absorbing topic of Political Tendencies, leaves room for only few and imperfect notes upon the chapter of M. de Véricour concerning Criticism, as well as upon the remaining chapters of his treatise. It is fortunate that his full and able review of those critical labors in which the French mind is peculiarly adapted to excel, renders additional remarks comparatively superfluous.

The voluminous *Cours de Littérature* of LAHARPE, whose rank has been properly assigned by our author, originated a class of works that have lately disappeared, giving place to compact manuals and elementary repertories, some of which possess a value superior to their modest pretensions.

VILLEMAIN, SAINTE-BEUVE, NISARD, GUSTAVE PLANCHE, AMPERE, and other principal French critics are duly enumerated by M. De Véricour.

In the fall of 1846, M. VILLEMAIN issued a new edition of those works which have gained for him a brilliant and durable fame. This collection, including *les Discours Littéraires, les Etudes de Littérature ancienne et étrangère, les Etudes d'histoire moderne, le Tableau de l'eloquence chrétienne au quatrième siècle*, and lastly *le Cours de littérature française*, is nearly complete. Only *l'Histoire de Cromwell* is wanting.

About the same time, M. SAINTE-BEUVE added a third volume to his celebrated *Portraits contemporains et divers*, which, like his *Critiques et Portraits Littéraires*, derive an indescribable charm from their subtle analysis of the varieties of mental character.

In 1844, M. NISARD published two volumes of the *Histoire de la Littérature Française*. The style and tone of this work accord with the severity of his rhetorical principles. His extremely pure taste often rejects what would not offend it if his sympathies were more liberal. But who shall rashly censure him for upholding that literary conservatism which checks the influences of corruption, while it can never restrain true genius? Rules that are too rigid when applied to transcendant abilities, are useful in confining the extravagances of inferior minds.

M. GUTAVE PLANCHE has, it is said, lately bade adieu to literature and the world, by becoming a monk.

M. AMPERE, besides his learned *Histoire Littéraire de la France avant le Douzième Siècle*, mentioned in the text, is the author of a discourse *De l'histoire de la Poésie*, and a volume entitled *Littérature et Voyages, Allemagne et Scandinavie*, as well as numerous articles, remarkable for their erudition, in the *Revue Française*, the *National*, and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

M. SAINT-MARC-GIRARDIN, one of the ablest professors at the Sorbonne, and an active member of the late Chamber of Deputies, gained the prize of eloquence from the French Academy, by his *Tableau de la*

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Littérature Française. He has also produced a valuable work under the title of *Cours de littérature dramatique, ou De l'usage des passions dans le drame.*

M. LERMINIER, professor of philosophy at the College of France, has partly lost the transient popularity which he had acquired by a succession of works, more brilliant than profound, upon the philosophy of jurisprudence, and upon the history of metaphysical systems in different countries. His writings, although generally superficial, sometimes display great vigor of mind, and in his *Etudes d'Histoire et de Philosophie* he has touched, as our author observes, some of the most lofty points of criticism.

M. DE GERANDO, who was raised to the peerage in 1837, and died in 1842, exhibited unusual powers as a philosophical critic in his *Histoire Comparée des Systèmes de Philosophie relativement aux Principes des Connaissances Humaines.* This work prepared the way for the critical writers of the Eclectic School, whose productions are referred to in another place. M. de Gerando is widely known in the United States by a translation of one of his works in Moral Philosophy, *Du perfectionnement moral, ou l'Education de Soi-Même*, upon which the Montyon prize was conferred.

Many of the best specimens of the modern Critical Literature of France are afforded by the "Miscellanies" which authors form by collecting their articles in reviews and journals. Thus, for instance, we have the *Mélanges Philosophiques, Littéraires, Historiques et Religieux* of STAPFER, to whose learning and sagacity as a critic no less than as a philosopher, several of the most distinguished intellects* of the day owe their union of German depth of thought with French clearness and sprightliness of expression: we may expect also to recognize, in a forth-coming edition of the Complete Works of Stapfer's friend and admirer, the lamented VINET, many of those articles which had attracted so much notice in periodical journals that shortly before his death, in 1847, a European reputation was gathering around his name† : we have the *Fragments Littéraires* of

* In 1806, M. Guizot, then young, poor, and unknown, was hospitably received into the house of Stapfer, where, for two years, he read largely of Kant and German literature; and his mind, like the minds of not a few contemporaries, took from that Christian scholar an impress and direction which has never been lost.

† ALEXANDRE VINET will be honored by posterity as one of the foremost men of the nineteenth century. To a clear sense of religious liberty and the rights of conscience, (for which he made sacrifices as well as wrote,) to a profound acquaintance with theology and Christian ethics, and to rare æsthetic and metaphysical acumen, he added "that wisdom which passeth understanding." No master of the French language since the days of Pascal, whom he at once admired and resembled, has presented a more perfect combination of high intellectual and moral endowments. A native of Switzerland, which has nearer affinities to Germany than to France, his studies enabled him to imbibe the spirit of the respective literatures of both those countries. The professorship which he long held at Bâsle

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VICTOR COUSIN, the *Littérature et Philosophie Melées* of VICTOR HUGO, the *Mélange Historiques et Littéraires* of the historian DE BARANTE, whose articles on Schiller and especially on the *Hamlet* of Shakspeare, show a familiarity with the highest walks of German and English literature, the *Passé et Présent, Mélanges*, by M. CHARLES DE REMUSAT, the gifted successor, in 1847, of Royer Collard as Member of the French Academy: and, to mention no more examples, we have the numerous volumes of *Etudes* into which M. PHILARETE CHASLES, professor of foreign literature at the College of France, and director of the Magazine Library, unites, from time to time, the articles which his prolific pen has long furnished to the *Revues de Paris* and *des Deux Mondes*, the *Revue Brittanique*, and the daily journals. Few have written more than M. Chasles, whose acquaintance with ancient and modern literature has been of great service to him as an author. Well versed in Greek, a comparatively rare accomplishment among Frenchmen, and in the modern

placed him in a favorable position for intellectual development. He could there draw, with equal facility, from two abundant sources of philosophy and literature. He read Pascal and Lessing, Bossuet and Herder, Voltaire and Goethe, Racine and Schiller, Guizot and Muller, Chateaubriand and Schilling, taking from each side whatever suited his own genius. His works, consequently, offer a judicious mixture of French vivacity and German seriousness. They unite the extensive erudition and elevated views which characterize the writers beyond the Rhine, with the charms of style, the exquisite *Atticism*, which belong to the writers of France.

One of the founders of *Le Semeur*, a leading Parisian journal, he was, during sixteen years, its most active and able contributor. His special department was to review the productions of distinguished living French authors. "His articles, if united, would form," said *Le Semeur* after his decease, "an admirable course of contemporary literature in a Christian point of view. That he might be more sure of not mistaking the nature of the moral errors and false hopes to which he wished to oppose the divine remedy, M. Vinet studied them in the works of the most illustrious representatives of modern thought. Just before his death, he had proposed to continue his critical series by a review of Lamartine's History of the Girondists." These articles, and a series of lectures delivered by him while professor of the French language and literature at Basle (which, it may be stated, has already been widely circulated in an autographic copy of the original manuscript) will probably be comprised in the edition of his Complete Works. His *Chrestomathie Française* must be mentioned as holding the highest rank among books of its class. It contains, in three volumes, choice passages from the best French authors. Far from being a mere compilation, it discovers in the selection and arrangement of the extracts, in prefatory remarks, notices of the principal writers, and frequent footnotes, the taste and learning of the editor. The first volume is designed for children, the second for youth, and the third for persons of mature age.

The articles in *Le Semeur*, occasioned by the decease of Vinet on the 4th of May, 1847, at Lausanne, his birth-place, the opinion expressed by Lamartine concerning him, and an elaborate sketch of his character by Sainte-Beuve, may be consulted by those who would become more fully acquainted with this eminent scholar and divine. The interesting biographical account of him in the Pulpit Orators of France and Switzerland by Rev. R. Turnbull, translator of Vinet's Vital Christianity, is more accessible to American readers.

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European languages, both of Teutonic and Latin origin, he has enriched his pages with much curious learning without sacrificing to it the peculiar vivacity of French style. His studies have been, it is said, so excursive that they cannot always be thorough; but many of his productions bear marks of laborious research. Those which relate to English literature naturally exhibit unusual familiarity with it, inasmuch as M. Chasles resided seven or eight years at London, where, besides other literary labors, he assisted in preparing several of Valpy's series of classical editions. Whatever his subject may be, he shows infinite tact in seizing upon its main points and in skilfully grouping around them the citations which he is able to select from sources inaccessible to the general reader. No one has a happier facility for throwing into a popular form "the results of a studious life." In closing this paragraph, a bare reference may be made to M. CHARLES LABITTE and M. J. CHAUDES-AIGUES, two young critics whose deaths within the past two years have disappointed the hopes excited by their respective merits. The former, shortly previous to his decease, had left his professorship of foreign literature at the Faculty of Rennes, and come to Paris as the *suppléant* or substitute of M. Tissot, professor at the College of France. The latter had just received an honorable appointment, by the Minister of Public Instruction, in one of the great libraries of Paris; too late, however, to save him from the effect of the struggles of his laborious life as a journalist. *Etudes Littéraires*, by M. Labitte, preceded by a notice from the pen of Sainte-Beuve,—and *Les Ecrivains Modernes de la France*, by M. Chaudes-Aigues, to whose memory Jules Janin has paid a suitable tribute, are both composed principally of articles that first appeared in periodicals, and therefore belong to the large class of "Miscellanies," of which we have spoken.

A work of altogether a different character, which unites biography and bibliography, and is necessarily interspersed with numerous critical remarks, is *La Littérature Française Contemporaine, XIX e Siècle*, commenced by M. J. M. QUERARD, the learned author of *La France Littéraire*, and continued by M. M. CH. LOUANDRE and FELIX BOURQUELOT. M. Louandre, in three elaborate articles which appeared last fall (1847) in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, made this biographical dictionary and the *Journal de la Librairie* the texts of a statistical account *De la Production Intellectuelle en France depuis Quinze Auz.* An entire translation of these articles had been prepared for this Appendix, but their length would increase too much the bulk of the present volume. The general reader, perhaps, would fail to be interested in statements which presuppose a considerable familiarity with the course of modern French literature. If space and time permitted, it would be well to draw more largely upon the *Statistique Littéraire* of M. Louandre for interesting facts than is now possible.

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P. 195. THE STUDY OF FOREIGN LITERATURE has made great progress in France within the last twenty-five or thirty years. Formerly, Frenchmen would almost have believed that the national dignity was compromised by admiring the master-pieces of foreign literature. Now, they wisely appreciate the benefits of intellectual commerce between different nations. As the text intimates, the literature of Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and England have been sedulously studied in France. The literatures of Poland and of Russia have also quite recently awakened great interest.

Besides the facilities which the French now possess for becoming acquainted with the languages of Modern Europe, they enjoy extraordinary means for the study of living Oriental languages. Ten professors are attached to the *Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes*, at the *Bibliothèque du Roi*, as that library was called before the late Revolution. "They lecture publicly and gratuitously in the following languages:* Pure Arabic, M. Rinaud; Vulgar Arabic, Caussin de Percival; Persian, Etienne Quatremère; Turkish, ——; Armenian, De Vaillant de Florival; Modern Greek, Hase; Hindoustani, Garcin de Tassy; Modern Chinese, Bazin; Malay and Javanese, Dularier; Chair of Arabic at Marseilles (assistant), Eusèbe de Salle." The great orientalists of France are comparatively few in number, but they have pushed their studies to a wonderful extent. Most of the modern oriental works which have issued from *l'imprimerie royale*, says Louandre, have been there printed for the first time, and often from unique manuscripts, so that the French savans of the present day have accomplished for the texts of these *princeps* editions the same critical and philological labor as the savans of the sixteenth century for the *princeps* editions of Greek authors. Moreover, they have not limited their task to that of mere editors. They have revealed by translations the poetry of the Chinese, the Arabs, the Persians, the Georgians, the Hindoos. Religion, philosophy, sciences and arts, geography, history, biography, manners and customs, they have studied the details of all; Silvestre de Sacy, Abel de Remusat, have shown themselves real encyclopedists. M. Burnouf has restored idioms, as Cuvier restored a world, and M. Quatremère has formed, for the history of Asia, the art of verifying dates. The Annual Report of the Société Asiatique, read at the annual meeting in June, 1847, and recent Numbers of its invaluable Journal, manifest the zeal and success with which Oriental studies have lately been pursued in France. To mention only a single production in this department, we have seen within a few weeks the work of M. Garcin de Tassy on the rhetoric of the Moslem nations: it is now completed.

* Bibliotheca Sacra, No. XVII, New Series, p. 198. In Art. X. of that Quarterly, for Feb. 1848, Prof. B. B. Edwards states many interesting particulars concerning the Sorbonne and other Colleges, as well as concerning the state of Oriental studies in Paris.

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P. 196. The Criticism of the French Periodical Press, as our author asserts, no longer retains the high rank which it once held. The writers whose excellent literary and scientific articles once so frequently graced the columns of the daily journals, have been banished to the pages of the reviews, which are of British origin, and a few of which seem to have become more firmly established in France than they were when M. de Vèricour wrote. To those mentioned by him we need only add *La Revue Indépendante*, which, like the *Revue du Progrès politique, social et littéraire*, edited by Louis Blanc, is the organ of a class of thinkers who are represented, at least partly and in various degrees, by George Sand (Mme. Dudevant) and Daniel Stern (Mme. de Agoult). The latter lady wrote for *La Revue Indépendante*, a few months ago, an article on the poetical and philosophical characteristics of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Parisian journals, of all kinds, have been greatly multiplied since the Revolution of July, 1830. But in many respects they appear to have lost in merit what they have gained in number. They have yielded to the material spirit which prevailed in France during the late reign. Exclusively political and literary under the Empire and the Restoration, they have lowered their tone, while extending their sphere, for the sake of an enlarged list of subscribers. The number of journals at Paris, in 1828, was 176; their number, a few months since, was 440. The number of those published in the Departments was estimated at 560, thus forming a total of 1000. The reduction of the price of some journals, and the invasion of the *Roman-feuilleton*, were among the main causes of this increase. The former was a happy innovation; the latter was most pernicious, creating a floating mass of subscribers, whose attachment to the journal depended solely on the success of its feuilletons—sweeping away enormous sums of money, with which it was indispensable to secure the aid of the most fashionable novelists,—exhausting the resources of the authors themselves by incessant and forced production, which rendered serious criticism impossible, and degraded art into a trade,—and, finally, corrupting alike the tastes and the morals of the community.

It may be well to give the following explanation of the word *feuilleton*. "Till within a few years, the lower part of a French newspaper, separated by a line of demarcation from the politics and the mere news, was called the feuilleton. It consisted of small, short columns, and was devoted to literature and literary criticism. It was in these columns that the Geoffroys, Hoffmans, and other able men of the day, produced articles worthy of a permanent place in the standard literature of France. This was the ancient feuilleton, which has degenerated in the hands of Janin. Though subsequently sought to be restored to its pristine purity by Evariste, Dumoulin, Sainte-Beuve, Nisard, Gustave Planche, and others, the ancient feuilleton has now expanded into the 'Roman-feuilleton,' in which all sorts of literary monstrosities are perpetrated." The Roman-

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feuilleton, correctly described as consisting of "fragments of novels, continued from day to day," each fragment surpassing its predecessor in exaggeration of style and incident, was first brought into vogue by *La Presse*, the journal of M. Emile de Girardin. This journal has done more than any other to excite a greedy spirit of gain in those writers whose talents it enslaved and injured. It has even speculated upon the death of eminent men, ostentatiously announcing its purchased right to publish the *Mémoires d'outre Tombeau* of Chateaubriand, and the *Confidences* of Lamartine, so soon as those illustrious authors shall have ceased to breathe. Its engagements with literary celebrities, like Alexandre Dumas, George Sand, De Balzac, Frederic Soulié, Théophile Gautier and Jules Sandeau, and the prosecutions occasioned, in 1847, by Alexandre Dumas's alleged violation of his contract, would afford materials for a new chapter in D'Israeli's Curiosities of Literature. An idea can be formed of these engagements, from the single fact that Dumas agreed to furnish *La Presse* yearly, for five years, with eleven volumes of novels, for which he was to receive an annual compensation of 63,000 francs, or 12,600 dollars; on condition of withholding from other publishers all that he should write except eighty new works, to contain 226,000 lines, which he was in the course of publishing at the date of his new contract. No wonder that he should employ—he certainly needed—assistance in fabricating a quantity of romance to which not even his prolific genius was equal. Similar contracts were made, by different journals, with other writers, for example, with Eugene Sue, whose failure to comply with the stipulations of the *Constitutionnel*, led him, like Dumas, before the tribunals. Thus romances were ordered, by the wholesale houses in the journal line, by the square yard or the square foot. They were like Peter Pindar's razors, not made to shave but to sell; they were written, not to portray life as it really is, but to present it as a series of startling incidents and contrasts, intermingled with crimes of every hue. Fortunately, the public mind, surfeited with such stuff, had already returned to the healthier perusal of 'books which are books,' before the Revolution came to destroy, by its events, the frivolous importance of the Roman-feuilleton. The feuilletonists, whose productions were either a horrid nightmare of disjointed masses of grossness and crime, or the very midsummer madness of affectation, of false, vapory sentiment, and of fantastic effeminacy, disappeared before a revolution which roused Paris and France to noble deeds, and supplied them with real emotions. "Othello's occupation was gone," at least for a season. And Alexandre Dumas himself, the most celebrated of feuilletonists, is now able to catch the popular ear only by short, pithy, political articles.

Before dismissing the subject of periodical literature, under the late reign, it is right to admit that if the press may be reproached for many faults, if it has appealed rather to curiosity than to convictions, if it has

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yielded to the corrupting influence of the *Roman-feuilleton*, it may, at the same time, be commended for its tendency to popularize every kind of practical information, by daily assuming a more encyclopædiac character. Scientific journals have enabled the public to follow the rapid movement of modern science in its various directions. Many journals designed exclusively for professional men, (like, for instance, certain Medical gazettes, and the *Revue de Legislation et de Jurisprudence*,) have attained a high order of merit. An influence, less immediate, but equally permanent as that of the daily papers, has been exercised by a very few of numerous weekly journals of a miscellaneous character. Among these, and, in some respects, above and apart from all the other periodical publications of Paris, is *Le Semeur*, which discusses philosophical, moral, scientific and literary subjects in their relations to religious truth. This is the noble office of a Christian journalist,—"to trace the broad shadows cast from imperishable realities on the shifting scenery of earth." The principal editor of *Le Semeur* (with which the late M. Vinet was connected for sixteen years) is M. Henri Lutteroth.

The political power of newspapers in Paris is immense. It is well known that a ministry has, more than once, been elevated or cast down by a newspaper. In the recent revolution, still more has been accomplished by this weapon of strength; a dynasty has been overturned, and a throne destroyed. The king of the French, on the 24th of February, received his act of abdication to sign from the hands of Emile de Girardin,* his ancient advocate and defender, the editor of *La Presse*. The conspicuous part which was performed on the same day by the editors of *La Réforme*, another Parisian paper, has already been shown. And the fall of Louis Philippe may be ascribed, in a great measure, to the incessant agitation which has been kept up for years by the opposition journalists, as well as, more recently, to the increasing influence of the socialistic doctrines of *La Democratie Pacifique*, and, it may be added, to the steady remonstrances of *Le Semeur* against the indifference of Government to the claims of religious and civil liberty.

Since the Revolution, the removal of the stamp-duty and the reduction of the subscription price has given a fresh impulse to journalism. More than eighty new periodicals have been started. The very walls of Paris, covered with blue, green, and yellow placards, form, as they did during the first Revolution, a universal journal, which 'all who run may read.' The papers mentioned by our author have, *provisionally* at least, accepted the new order of things. Some of them, indeed, were instrumental in

* When the first revolutionary enthusiasm had assembled the friends of the lamented republican Armand Carrel around his grave, Emile de Girardin, by whom his death had been caused, took occasion to make a kind of propitiatory offering to the country for having deprived it of so valuable a life. This singular but not dishonorable act has been misrepresented.

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producing it. The journals which are now most influential in upholding it are the *National* of M. Marrast, the *Réforme* of M. Flocon, and *Le Peuple Constituant*, lately founded by De Lammenais. Buchez, the President of the National Assembly, whose philosophical theories had rallied round him a few hundred *Buchésistes*, or *Buchésiens*, discourses in his *Revue Nationale;* George Sand, until warned to retire from Paris, on account of her suspected connivance with the insurrection of the 15th of May, had also her Review, *La Cause du Peuple;* and, in short, by newspapers and by pamphlets, as well as by reviews, the periodical press has become the organ of all varieties of individual and public opinion.

An article which appeared in the British Quarterly Review, and was reprinted at New York, in the Eclectic Magazine for July, 1846, although not free from prejudiced statements, contains many reliable facts concerning the newspaper press of France. The reader will find many curious particulars in a little book by M. Eugene Hatin, entitled *Histoire de Journal en France* (Paris, 1846), and also in a special work of greater importance *Histoire des Journaux et des Journalistes de la Revolution Française, précedée d'une Introduction générale*, by M. Léonard Gallois, Paris, 1847.

P. 202. The University of France is a wide and complicated system of instruction, embracing the extent of France, and reaching, in its supervision, from the teachers of the highest literature and science to those of the humblest elements of knowledge. It is said that it will soon be subjected to important modifications, the nature of which does not yet appear. Some of the members of the late Provisional Government assumed professorships in the College of France, imitating Guizot, Villemain, Cousin, and other eminent professors who retained, while ministers, their academical offices. It is probable that the former will lecture as rarely as their predecessors; more than one stranger has formed his opinion, favorable or unfavorable, of those distinguished scholars from listening, unconsciously, to their substitutes in the professional chair. Within a short time after the three days of February, the courses suspended by the preceding government, (for instance, those of MM. Michelet and Quinet,) were resumed. While, moreover, the United States furnish to the French a model for their republicanism, a hint has been borrowed from China for their choice of office-holders, whom it is proposed to select among the ablest pupils of the University for the high employments of State.

Lamartine is nominated Professor of International Law (in place of Lerminier); Garnier Pages, Professor of Statistical and General Economy, Finances and Commerce; Armand Marrast, of Civil Law, Individual and Social; Ledru-Rollin, of the History of French and Foreign Administrative Institutions.

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P. 204. CLASSICAL STUDIES IN FRANCE. The revival of an interest in classical studies has been principally marked by frequent and successful serial editions of Greek and Latin authors. The text of several among these is accompanied by a French translation; *Bibliothèques latines-françaises*, and *Bibliotheques grecques* have met with general popularity.

P. 217—227. GUIZOT has now an opportunity to resume the historical studies by which he formerly gained a great and honorable celebrity. By a French gentleman who was admitted to an interview with the Ex-Minister, a few weeks since in London, we are informed that he has already undertaken to continue his famous works, *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*, and *Histoire de la Revolution d'Angleterre*, and also to write a new work with this title, *l'Histoire de France racontée à mes Enfans.*

P. 237. THIERS possesses many of the best qualities of an historian. He has displayed them not only throughout the ten volumes of his complete and highly finished *Histoire de la Revolution française;* but also in all that has yet appeared of the ten volumes devoted by him to the *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire.* The seventh of these volumes was published last summer (1847), at a moment when France may be said to have been inundated by histories of the Revolution and the Empire. Wonderful as is the genius of several contemporary writers, not one of them surpasses M. Thiers in a thorough knowledge of the arts of war, administration, finance, and diplomacy, an apprehension of past occurrences so perfect as to lend his narrative the charm of a recital by an eye-witness; a style full of simplicity, ease, and clearness, borrowing its animation and occasional eloquence only from the rapid and majestic course of events.

The second work of M. Thiers seems to have been written with a firmer hand, a riper judgment, than the first. The exciting scenes of the Revolution sometimes betrayed his language into an impetuosity bordering upon passion; but the Imperial grandeur of France imposed on the historian a certain calm dignity of tone which becomes almost sublime when he reaches the battle-fields of Marengo and Austerlitz.

P. 241. M. BUCHEZ has not been prevented by his peculiar philosophical notions, (which have been a subject of remark elsewhere in these notes,) from imparting to the *Histoire Parliamentaire*, that vast collection in forty volumes, arranged by himself and his friend Roux, a high value in the eyes of all who wish to study historical facts in contemporaneous documents. Called, as President of the National Assembly, to become an actor in Parliamentary History, of which he has before been the annalist, M. Buchez must have been struck, on the 15th of May, by one of those

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coincidences that sometimes occur. In *l'Histoire Parliamentaire* are recorded all the proclamations and decrees seized at the dwelling of Babœuf after his famous conspiracy. Among them is the following: "*Quiconque fera battre la générale sera mis à mort!*" On the 15th of May, 1848, the conspirator Barbès exclaimed in the National Assembly, over which Buchez was presiding: "*Declarons traître à la patrie quiconque fera battre le rappel!*" Surely, says a Parisian journalist, commenting on this circumstance, our modern demagogues are a band of shameless imitators!

P. 246. MERLE D'AUBIGNE, the Genevese historian of Protestant Reformation, is here alluded to in a manner that will not please his numerous admirers in this country and in Great Britain. His fourth volume of *l'Histoire de la Réformation du Seizième Siècle*, was published at Paris last year (1847), and, we presume, has already been translated and widely circulated in English, like the three preceding volumes. Without resorting for proof to the ingenious examination of this History by the Rev. Dr. Spalding of Kentucky, it may be admitted that the partizan spirit betrayed by Dr. Merle cannot add to his value as a historian, although it may enable him to single out the main points of his subject, and to infuse his recital with glowing life. He certainly paints with striking colors pictures which cannot fail to seize the mind. With reference to the fourth volume of *l'Histoire de la Réformation*, a learned protestant reviewer, in *Le Semeur*, alluding to the attraction of the narrative, observes: "*ce dernier charme est le secret de l'auteur; s'il fallait en donner explication, nous dirions peut-être qu'il résulte de sa vive sympathie pour le sujet qu'il traite: la plume de l'historien trahit le partisan, aussi peu disposé à considérer les débats religieux de Marbourg et d'Augsbourg comme appartenant au passé, que MM. de Lamartine et Thiers pourraient l'être à y rejeter les débats de la Constituante*—this, the secret charm of the author, springs from his lively sympathy with his subject; the pen of the historian betrays the partisan no more disposed to consider the religious debates of Marbourg and Augsbourg as belonging to the past, than MM. de Lamartine and Thiers would be to throw back there the debates of the Constituent Assembly."

In this connection, it may be barely stated that considerable interest has been awakened in France by two works of M. Emile de Bonnechose, which passed, last year and year before last, to a second edition: *Les Réformateurs avant la Réforme* and a translation of the *Lettres de Jean Hus*. Attention was also excited, last year, by a *Histoire du Concile de Trente*, from the pen of M. L. F. Bungener, as well as by other works of a similar range of topics.

P. 250. M. SALVADOR announced, several years ago, the approaching completion of a work which he had entitled *De l'etat actuel des esprits*

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en matière de religion; in other terms, *De la question religieuse, de la revolution religieuse au dix-neuvième Siécle.* This the learned Jewish philosopher and historian intended as the natural and necessary complement of his *Histoire des Institutions de Motse, et du peuple hébreu,* and of his other history, *Jésus Christ, sa doctrine et le premier siécle de l'Eglise.* But the undertaking was temporarily suspended, while M. Salvador devoted himself to studies which resulted, in 1847, in his publication of *Histoire de la Domination romaine en Judée, et de la Ruine de Jérusalem.*

P. 283. BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS have been multiplied to profusion during the few past years. Their subjects have been as various as their qualities. Among them we have noticed Biographies of Useful Men, of Printers, of Precocious Children, Celebrated Bandits, Dwarfs, Actors, Contemporaneous Clergy, Female Authors, Deputies; in short, of representatives from all sorts and conditions of society.* Contemporaneous biography bears off the palm. Among those who have acquired a certain distinction in this department, the most successful are M. Blanqui, of the Institute, who in 1829 furnished to *le Figaro* sketches which raised the subscription list of that journal to twenty thousand; and M. de Loménie, who, under the anonymous title of *Un Homme de Rien,* has become widely and favorably known by the signal merits of his *Galerie des Contemporains Illustres.*

P. 207—285. HISTORICAL STUDIES IN FRANCE have yielded the richest tribute to its modern literature. Their unprecedented development within the past twenty years has occasioned, for this place, numerous notes, the insertion of which, however, is not permitted, we regret to say, by our limits. We must be content to offer a few indications.

Systematic courses of history, or *méthodes,* like that of Lenglet du Fresnoy, which formed in the eighteenth century indispensable introductions to historical studies, are stated by Louandre to have entirely disappeared, giving place to foreign importations, to Herder, to Vico, to Hegel. *La science nouvelle,* as it is called, borrowed from Germany and Italy, is reproached with showing too little regard for chronology, bending events to the caprice of systems; but it has not prevented great attention from being paid, in France, to chronological researches. An average amount of twenty works annually, most of them manuals and elementary treatises, is devoted to chronology and universal history. The recent edition of *l'Art de verifier les dates,* and the *Cours d'histoire* of Daunou, may be cited as important publications in those departments.

Ancient history has, of late, been chiefly studied in France by the aid

* We are gratified to learn that F. P. TRACY, Esq. will soon publish a translation of *Les Femmes Célébres de l'Ancienne France,* by M. LEROUX DE LINCY. Mr. Tracy, by his antiquarian researches at home and abroad, is well qualified to present a work of this kind to the American public.

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of foreign erudition. Rollin has been reprinted as often as ever, but translations from Heeren and Niebuhr have become more and more frequent. In this direction, Rome, and the relations of antiquity to modern times, have most largely occupied the minds of French scholars.

The progress, numerical at least, of Sacred and Ecclesiastical History, comprising, with the general annals of the church, the lives of saints, and the history of religious orders, of popes and of councils, may be inferred from the circumstance that thirty-four works of this kind appeared in 1833, and one hundred and twenty-one in 1845.

Foreign history is mainly known in France through translations from foreign writers. Thus, works of Prescott, Bancroft, Sparks, and the lamented Wheaton, have been translated into French and widely circulated. Two of the corresponding members in the Historical Section of the Institute are the eminent American historians Prescott and Bancroft. We remember that a report was read to the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, in 1844, by Thierry, with reference to Guillot's translation of the History of the Northmen by Wheaton, who was a corresponding member of the Academy. Sparks' Life of Washington and Life of Franklin (the former under the supervision of Guizot) have been published at Paris. Bancroft's History of the United States has been translated by M. De Goi. M. Amedée Pichot, well known by his history of the Chevalier Charles Edward, has made an excellent translation of the Conquest of Mexico by Prescott, whose productions have appeared in Spanish at Madrid and at Mexico, in Italian at Florence, in German at Berlin, and in Dutch at Amsterdam, as well as in French at Paris. Works of the English and Continental historians are also frequently translated. Original works, in foreign history, are rare. With a few brilliant exceptions, like Guizot, Augustin Thierry, Armand Carrel, and Mignet, French authors have generally neglected this field of inquiry.

But within the frontiers of their own country, the books written by them to illustrate its ancient and modern annals might, if brought together, be raised into pyramids.

Among the labors of the period extending from 1830 to 1848, a conspicuous place is held by great historical collections. Some of the vast publications commenced under the ancient monarchy and interrupted by the revolution, have been resumed with fresh ardor. The *Académie des Inscriptions* is at present continuing, among similar works, the *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*, begun by dom Bouquet, and *l'Histoire littéraire de la France*, by the Benedictines. This Academy has also undertaken a general collection of the *Historiens des Croisades*, divided into three series, Latin sources, Greek sources, and Oriental chronicles, Arabian or Persian. It moreover yearly adds new volumes to the *Extraits et Notices des Manuscrits de Bibliothèque du roi*, and to its unequalled *Mémoires*. The *Collection des documens inédits relatifs à l'Histoire de la France*, which is printed under the auspices and at the expense of gov-

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ernment, completes the publications of the Institute. In this collection, highly interesting volumes have been edited by MM. Augustin Thierry, Cousin, Fauriel, Mignet, Guréard, and Benquot. Various learned societies, in Paris and in the Departments, have actively seconded the efforts of the Institute by their own valuable publications of original documents. And the collection of M. Guizot, that of M. Buchon, that of MM. Petitot and Monmerqué, and that of MM. Michaud and Poujoulat, which form a total of 241 volumes, bear ample testimony to the activity of individual enterprise. To this number must also be added the mass of ancient writings exhumed from the libraries of entire Europe by a phalanx of ardent and learned young Frenchmen.*

The Parliamentary History of the French Revolution, by Buchez and Roux, reproduces, in forty volumes, almost complete records of whatever was done or said during that memorable period, and thus possesses a high documentary value. Similar merit belongs to the recent completion of a reprint of the ancient *Moniteur*, that veritable mirror of the time, and depository of its authentic annals. The thirty-two octavo volumes

* France, we believe, may claim the merit of having first instituted the kind of investigations in which these young men are usefully and honorably employed. In 1762, the Marquis de Brequigny, member of the Academy, was sent by government to London to collect the documents which might be found there relative to the history of France. Since that time, and particularly while the historians Thiers and Guizot were at the head of the French administration, agents have been employed to prosecute the same researches in the different capitals of Europe. Of late, an interest in similar enterprises has been manifested in different parts of the United States. The Rev. Mr. Howard, who was sent to London ten years ago, by the state of Georgia, to collect documents respecting the history of that State, brought home copies which filled twenty-two folio volumes. Rev. Dr. Stevens, professor in the college at Athens, collected at Paris, if we are not mistaken, some of the documents with which he has enriched his valuable History of Georgia. Mr. J. R. Brodhead obtained at Paris seventeen of the fifty volumes of copied documents which he brought from Europe as agent of the State of New York. Through the instrumentality of Governor Cass while Minister at the Court of France, Michigan—and through that of Mr. Forestall, Louisiana—have obtained transcripts of documents relating to their respective histories. More recently, Mr. Ben. Perley Poore, Historical Agent for Massachusetts, has deposited in the archives of the State ten folio volumes of manuscript copies, from the French offices, of documents illustrative of the colonial and provincial history of Massachusetts and of New England. "This collection," said Hon. J. G. Palfrey, late Secretary of State, in an official report concerning Mr. Poore, "bears the amplest testimony to his diligence, and skill, and judgment in investigation; and the execution is of unsurpassed beauty."

The present note will not be useless if it awaken further attention to the importance of such researches as have been mentioned. In the State-archives, in the libraries, and on the very quais at Paris, there may still be found abundant materials for American history. Thus at the *Bureau de la Marine* are many documents pertaining to Alabama. The liberal example of some States might well stimulate others which have no less to gain by encouraging the investigation of their interesting annals. Perhaps even the government at Washington, with the ample resources furnished by the Smithsonian bequest, might advantageously authorize labors which promote love of our country by facilitating the study of its history.

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of this journal, embrace the whole period from the assembling of the States-General to the Consulate. The reader assists at the works of destruction and of reconstruction at the very moment when they are going on. He listens to the stormy debates of the tribune, and to the noise of conflicts in the streets. He peruses the earliest news of combats on the frontiers, on the Rhine, in Italy, Switzerland, Egypt, and La Vendée. He studies the statistics of finance, the intrigues of diplomacy, the plans of military movements, and observes, step by step, the changes of administration, and the developments of literary, scientific, and social life. Carlyle thus describes this perpetual reflection of passing events, in the midst of the Revolution:—"Constant, illuminative as the nightly lamplighter, issues the useful *Moniteur*, for it is now become diurnal; with facts and few commentaries, official, safe in the middle.' In the late reprint, nothing is omitted. Letters, poetical effusions, advertisements, and play-bills, all are preserved. This is wisely done, for these very details, apparently so trivial and insignificant, are precious to the investigating eye of the romance writer, the philosopher, and the historian. Files of old newspapers are among the most valuable original sources of history.

Passing from documents to the writers by whom these are wrought up into history, we are amazed at their indefatigable zeal. At no other epoch have historians, truly worthy of the name, been more numerous or better appreciated. It suffices to name in erudition MM. Daunou, De Pastouret, Pardenus, Beugnot; in history, MM. Guizot, Augustin and Amedee Thierry, Michelet, De Barante, Mignet, Guerard and Sismondi. The books of these great masters are found in the study of the scholar, and the library of the man of fashion; as proof of their popularity, it may be stated that more than one hundred thousand copies of the works of M. Augustin Thierry have been circulated.

General works of history are less frequent in France than works relative to certain great periods. With special works of this kind the names of MM. Capefigue, Dumas, De Conny, Cabet, Beraud and Laponneraye are connected in various degrees of honor. To such, also, is due the legitimate popularity enjoyed for twenty years by Thiers and Mignet. And, finally, during the last year, 1847, by means of such works a new historical triumvirate was constituted in the persons of Michelet, Louis Blanc, and Lamartine.

The histories of the Revolution by Michelet and by Louis Blanc reveal the characteristics of their respective authors. The burning logic of Michelet often explodes into passion amidst the scenes which he describes with graphic power. Louis Blanc, it is declared by his admirers, unites the vigor of Tacitus with the profundity of Pascal. In his *Histoire de Dix Ans*, 1830—1840, he had already furnished an extraordinary key to the movements of the republican party during that period, and, it may

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now be added, a prophetic explanation of the revolution of 1848. The influence of Louis Blanc and Michelet has been prodigious.

But the interest excited by their works was far surpassed by the mingled astonishment and enthusiasm with which *l'Histoire des Girondins* of Lamartine was received by the public. None wondered that an *enfant du peuple* (a child of the people) like Michelet, or that a writer who had devoted his pen to the democratic party like Louis Blanc, should undertake the defence of the Revolution; none thought of praising them for it: but that a poet who, less than twenty-five years before, had sung in honor of the old Bourbon dynasty should, as an historian, proclaim the sovereignty of the people—boldly rescuing even Robespierre from unjust infamy, in such a manner as to prove an intention 'nothing to extenuate or aught set down in malice'—that Lamartine should sacrifice to a sense of duty the attachments by which birth and education and natural prepossessions bound him to the party of the past, and should join at once and forever the party of the future,—this sincere homage spontaneously rendered to the truth, was the more admirable because unexpected, and merited acknowledgement no less than it caused surprise.

Lamartine, in the preface to his great work, modestly declines a comparison with historians, asserting that his aim has been to produce "*qu'une étude sur un groupe d'hommes et sur quelques mois de la revolution*—nothing more than a 'study' of a group of men and a few months of the Revolution.'

This *étude*, which has all the importance of an *histoire*, and even greater proportions, is a magnificent mosaic of all kinds of style. The author appears successively as historian, philosopher, statesman, biographer, poet, rhetorician, and romance writer. If the work had presented merely the usual claims of a history, certain objections, on account of faults in plan and in details, might be preferred against it.* But the

* There are spots on the sun, and the splendor of Lamartine's prose is not without blemishes. The author is betrayed into an occasional over-refinement of language, on the one hand, and, on the other, into an occasional use of those pretending but empty phrases which, without any determinate meaning, form the shiboleth of a certain class of writers: sometimes the graceful page is disfigured by forced conceits, and often it is encumbered by its own beauty; while the rapid and perpetual succession of brilliant scenes and images is apt to dazzle, bewilder, and, at length, fatigue the admiring reader.

A work so extensive as *l'Histoire des Girondins* cannot be expected to be entirely free from wrong statements. One of the most serious of these errors has been detected in Vol. II, Bk. xxxiii, where an unjustifiable accusation is brought against Thomas Paine, and through him against the United States, the adopted country of that well-known advocate of republican freedom. The charge called forth from an American citizen resident in Paris, Mr. George Sumner, an eloquent and satisfactory refutation, which was accompanied by interesting details concerning early relations between France and the United States. This first appeared in the *Journal des Debats*, in the form of a letter to the illustrious historian. The deservedly high consideration in which Mr. Sumner is held at Paris, lent peculiar weight to his article,

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word *étude* explains if it does not justify the whole. "This recital," says Lamartine, to quote again from his preface, "does not affect the gravity of history. It is an intermediate labor between history and memoirs. Events do not herein occupy so much space as men and ideas."

Men and ideas—these are the talismans of the magical power of the history.

It is a stately gallery which exhibits the portraits of the great actors in the revolutionary drama. To whatever party they may have belonged, they are painted with an eye so delicate and true, with such strength of coloring, with so wonderful a variety of tones, with a resemblance so striking, that it is impossible not to recognize the hand of a master. In this line of art, Lamartine is without an equal. His glowing page seems to live and move with the forms of Mirabeau, Louis XVI, Marie-Antoinette, Robespierre, Lafayette, Barnave, Voltaire, Vergniaud, Madame de Stael, Madame Roland, Brissot, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Dumouriez, the Duke of Orleans, Barbaroux, and the other personages of the Revolution.

It is a forum of ideas, of republican ideas. Their eloquence rings throughout the whole history. Its echoes reached the popular ear, reviving everywhere the discussion of those ideas, pointing out the causes of their former failure, and preparing the way for the late revolution, of which the historian of the Girondists has become the master-spirit.

Pp. 287—318. ROMANCE WRITING, since its irruption into the Journals in 1836, has become in France *la fabrication par excellence*—a regular system of manufacturing. Thus ALEXANDRE DUMAS, whose speculations in Romance have been conducted on a gigantic scale, has, according to the evidence of the learned bibliographer, M. Quérard, industriously plied this business at the head of *seventy-four* collaborators, or assistants, turning out dramas, histories, and travels as well as novels by the wholesale, in such profusion that the market is well nigh overstocked.

Most of the writers mentioned in this chapter, except M. NODIER and M. SOULIE, are still living, and scarcely one of them has escaped the contagion of the *Roman-Feuilleton*. Serious criticism is undeserved by this species of frivolous and corrupting fiction, with its interminable plots and counter-plots, its kaleidescope representations of all possible varieties of sin; and its wretched style,—for its rhetoric is, with rare exceptions, as contemptible as its morality. The elegant diction of many immoral writings which have issued from the French press might almost seem to justify the paradox of Burke that "vice loses half its guilt, by losing all its deformity:" but this utterly fails of being applicable to these exaggerated and revolting portraitures of social iniquity,—these hideous de-

which M. de Lamartine himself has caused to be appended to subsequent editions of the History.

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velopments of the evil propensities of man. Even when the *Roman-Feuilleton* displays the charms of literary beauty, its flowery pages exhale a poisonous odor; like the fig-leaves in the basket of the Egyptian queen, (to borrow an illustration,) they are defiled by the asp's trail and slime, while the sly worm itself lurks beneath.

The most popular of the recent French romances and novels, and some of the vilest among them have been translated and extensively circulated in this country. The *Monte Christo* of Alexandre Dumas and, especially, the *Mystères de Paris* and the *Juif Errant* of Eugene Sue, are as well known here as in France. The last production of M. Sue, *Martin, ou l'Enfant Trouvé*, was an utter failure on both sides of the Atlantic. It may here be remarked that in spite of the sympathies with the poor and degraded classes in society apparent in the later writings of M. Sue, it is said that he still personally affects the aristocratic habits and notions ascribed to him in the text. With reference to the numberless translations of the novels of Paul de Kock, who, with all his grossness, is the most healthy, and therefore the best delineator of manners in certain walks of Parisian life,—it must be said that some American publishers have by yellow covers and by wood-cuts as poor in point of art as of decency, made them seem much worse than they really are. Several of the least objectionable productions of this Smollet of France have thus been spoilt for our community. The pen of Paul de Kock sometimes rivals the pencil of Hogarth. Thanks to the taste of Mr. Geo. Francis Shaw, the translator of many of the works of George Sand, that eminent writer appears before the American public in a more attractive dress. Our author has shown commendable candor and justice in his remarks concerning Madame Dudevant. Even her fine style, however, has suffered from the influence of the Roman-Feuilleton; and she has lately been placed in a doubtful light by her supposed connection with the conspirators of the 15th of May. Judged in a strictly moralistic point of view, there is much that must be condemned in her early life, and in some of her writings. But as our text intimates, there are two distinct periods in her history, and in the latter period, at least, she has exhibited many of the highest personal as well as literary qualities.

Although the newspapers have monopolized the talents of modern French novelists, yet the book-trade has been able to speculate largely in the productions of the romance-literature of France during the last two centuries, and in that of foreign countries. The works of Lesage, l'Abbé Prevost, Florian, Voltaire, Ducray, Dumesnil and Marmontel are continually reprinted; and translations of those of Hoffman, Cervantes, Fielding, Sterne, Richardson, as well as of Scott, Cooper, Bulwer, Marryat and Dickens, meet with an immense sale. Since 1831, the works of our great American novelist, Cooper,* have, separately, or

* A young countryman of Cooper has ventured to follow his footsteps in exploring the wilds of Western Romance, and even to recount to the French, in their own lan-

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in complete sets, passed through, in France, thirty-one English, forty-two French, five Spanish, and two Portuguese editions; those of Bulwer, through fifty-nine editions, English or French, and the editions of Scott are countless. The translation of foreign works of fiction has absorbed the lives of many writers; the most prolific among them was Defaucompret, who died in 1843, after having translated eight hundred volumes.

Pp. 319—344. THE DRAMA.—It might be superfluous to present the notes that were intended to accompany this chapter, inasmuch as no new names of great importance have arisen in the recent dramatic literature of France, since M. de Vèricour wrote. Not that this department has been neglected. On the contrary as many writers have lately employed their talents in it, as in all the other branches of literature together. The number of living dramatic authors, at Paris, is estimated at nine hundred, without counting those wholly unsuccessful aspirants whose portfolios are full of rejected tragedies or vaudevilles.

Besides those who are busy in multiplying the number of plays, there is a host of writers at Paris who have devoted themselves to theatrical history, or to theatrical criticism. Many of the most valuable critics of the day belong to this class, and as much erudition has been displayed by Patin, Magnin, Michel, and De Monmerqué in their historical works as talent and wit by Jules Janin and Theophile Gautier in their weekly articles in the journals.

The controversy between the *drame* and the *tragedie* still exists in France, and in the winter of 1846 the *Agnès de Méranie* of M. PONSARD, author of *Lucrèce*, revived with fresh violence the old quarrel between the classical and the romantic schools. During the following winter (1847) a production of an altogether different kind, *Le Chiffonier de Paris*, by M. FELIX PYAT, who is now a member of the National Assembly, secured great success by its own merits, and the inimitable acting of Frederic Lemaître. It accomplished for the streets of Paris what some of Dickens' novels accomplished for those of London, revealing there a new world of interest, and was, moreover, a not insignificant expres-

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guage, a tale of life in the backwoods. *Le Whippowil, ou les Pionniers de l'Orégon* is the title of a novel which its author, Mr. AMEDEE BOUIS, has recently published at Paris, where he has resided nearly twelve years for purposes of study. He has aimed to interweave with the incidents of the story many details of curious learning in regard to the affinities between the manners, languages and superstitions of the American Indians, and those of aboriginal tribes in the old world. We have not learned the fate of his book; but if a strong attachment to his native land with its unrivalled scenery and its political institutions, if habits of patient industry, sound scholarship and a familiarity with the models of French style can avail in the career which he has chosen, we may hope that Mr. Bouis will be successful. At all events, so difficult is it for a foreigner to learn to write well in the most elegant of European languages, that an American novel composed in French by an American must be valued as, at least, a curiosity in literature.

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sion of political tendencies, which have since resulted in the Revolution.* The latest theatrical novelty in Paris is the *Theatre Historique*, the offspring of the fertile brain of ALEXANDRE DUMAS. Ambitious to astonish the Parisians by his romances in more than one way, this writer conceived the idea of a theatre where not only his plays, but even his novels, thrown into a dramatic form, might be enacted. In a few months his design was carried into execution under the patronage of the duke of Montpensier, and in the spring of 1847, a large and commodious building, with a sculptured façade, and a singularly arranged interior, was finished, and opened for the performance of *La Reine Margot*. Other novels from his pen have been converted, by the aid of scissors, into dramas, one of which has occupied two successive evenings by its representation in two parts. Dumas has thus been able, like Shakspeare and Corneille, to say, "I write for mine own stage."

During the excitement of the late revolution, the spectacle-loving Parisians found the streets more attractive than the stage, and, for months, the theatres, although announcing many plays suited to the temper of the times, have been, it is said, very thinly attended.

P. 345—375. POETRY. In a pleasing volume published at Paris in 1847, *La Galerie des Poètes Vivants*, the author, AUGUSTE DESPLACES, himself a poet, has collected the portraits of the living poets of France. Here are LAMARTINE, MUSSET, BERANGER, E. and A. DESCHAMPS, GAUTIER, TURQUETY, LAPRADE, ESQUIROS, VIGNY, RESSEGUIER, BARBIER, PONSARD, HOUSSAYE, BRISEUX, SAINTE-BEUVE, VICTOR HUGO, and many others, more or less known to fame. In the last chapter, entitled *Médaillons et Camées*, are traced the outlines of portraits that will appear in full in a second collection—portraits of Mesdames VALMORE, TASTU, DE GIRARDIN, and their sister-poets; also of MERY, LATOUCHE, JULES LEFEVRE, ROYER DE BEAUVOIR, and *tutti quanti*.

This reference to the elegant 'Gallery' of M. Desplaces may serve to indicate how numerous is the troop of modern French poets. M. Louandre has estimated at 4,383 the editions of poetical works in France during eleven years, from 1830 to 1841, without comprising in that number the incredible quantity of scattered verses in journals and magazines, of alexandrines in tragedies and comedies, or of couplets in vaudevilles.

But from the multitude who have helped to accumulate this huge pile, only three or four masters of the art of song can be distinguished. Even these have lately been engaged in other labors than 'building the lofty rhyme.' Thus Victor Hugo, the autocrat of numberless young writers whose worship of art has degenerated into idolatry of their model, into simple *hugolatry*, was, a few months ago, a peer of France, and has just

* Since this remark has been written, we learn that a member of the late Chamber of Deputies took occasion a few days before the 24th of February to signalize the revolutionary tone of *Le Chiffonier de Paris*, the Rag-Picker of Paris.

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been elected a member of the National Assembly. Thus also, Lamartine long since devoted himself to politics, and has become, successively, a parliamentary orator, a historian, and the statesman-hero of a revolution. Many of the conspicuous politicians of the day began, like M. Berryer, M. Louis Blanc, M. de Genoude, and M. de Cormenin, their literary career as poets. One member of the National Assembly, M. Reboul, the poet-baker of Nismes, belongs to the somewhat large body of poetical representatives from different trades in France. Besides the hair-dressers Jarmin,* (with his singular dialect,) Daveau, and Corsat, there are carpenters, masons, shoe-makers, clock-makers, weavers, gardeners, and, briefly, persons of almost every trade, who have gained a certain poetical reputation, and are so far fortunate, at least, as not to be forced to depend on verse-making for their livelihood.

If we could follow here the changes through which fashion, ruling at Paris over verse as well as dress, has led the modern poetry of France, we should find the French Muse, in 1825, melancholy and Byronic; in 1830, humanitarian and ambitious of domineering over the world; towards 1834, its strains are mournful with despair and death; in 1838, it would awaken the echoes of ancient creeds; in 1844, forgetting alike despair, death, and faith, it celebrates all the seductions of life; and finally in 1847, instead of being democratic and romantic, as it was ten or twelve years previously, it becomes classic and aristocratic, in strange contrast to the spirit of the age, affecting the tone and accents of profligate courtliness. Through all these changes it is accompanied, as we have before intimated, by a few great poets and a host of imitators.

Aside from the imitators of Victor Hugo, of De Lamartine, and of De Musset, we observe a small class of political poets, exponents of *la poésie d'opposition*, a class which MM. MERY and BARTHELEMY are considered (Joseph Despaze, their predecessor by twenty-five years, being forgotten) to have originated. Both of these clever versifiers and satirists are natives of Marseilles, and the southern sun, under which they were born, sometimes imparts a glow and fervor to their compositions. The popularity of their works may be inferred from the fact that *l'Insurrection*, published by them to celebrate the three glorious days of July, reached its fifth edition before the 10th of September in 1830. Eighty thousand copies of *La Villéliade*, by M. Barthélemy, published in 1825, had been sold in three years, and his *Némésis*, which appeared in weekly numbers during 1830—1832, enjoyed a similar success. But M. Barthélemy, this French Juvenal, has forfeited all credit to political morality by making his pen an instrument of vile traffic. He has abused or flattered power according to the measure of favor or of neglect which he has received

* In a recent Number of the American Whig Review is an interesting article on JASMIN, the poetical Hair-dresser of Agen. Although anonymous, it is said to be from a pen which, we hope, will often favor the public with the results of unusual opportunities for familiarity with more than one foreign literature.

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from it. It is said that a fatal passion for gambling has scarcely left him free to choose between independence and servility. The poet, whose vigorous and patriotic verses had been applauded by France, and whom the fear of imprisonment had not dismayed, was overcome by the golden temptations of the court; the late government purchased his silence, if not his voice, by engaging him, at the price of, 80,000 francs, to prepare a French version of the Æneid.

It is agreeable to turn from the venal muse of Barthélemy,* and contemplate the pure and lofty independence of the muse of BERANGER. Although this greatest of political poets bade adieu to poetry in 1833, by his *Chansons nouvelles et dernières*, yet more than one occasional song, an arrow out of the full quiver, has since winged its way to the public mind and heart from his retreat on the banks of the Loire, or amidst the stillness of Passy. Since the Revolution, the bard has strung his lyre anew, and, invoking the shade of Manuel, the republican orator who was expelled from the Chamber in 1823, and who afterward died in his arms, has sung an ode replete with pathos and patriotic inspiration.†

Extended criticisms upon poets whose names are comparatively unknown in this country, cannot possess much interest for American readers. None, however, could fail to be interested by translations from CHATEAUBRIAND, MILLEVOYE, BERANGER, LAMARTINE, DELAVIGNE, VICTOR HUGO, and BARBIER, which had been selected for this place, with the permission of Professor Longfellow, from his elegant anthology of the Poets and Poetry of Europe; but our limits will not admit of their insertion.

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* Barthélemy, last year, wrote some fine lines in honor of the great American discovery of the virtue of Ether in preventing pain; and he has recently addressed to President Polk a poem on America, marked by his characteristic nervous strength. This latter production has been admirably translated by F. A. DURIVAGE, Esq.

† ELIZUR WRIGHT, Esq., to whom the lovers of French poetry are indebted for an excellent translation of the fables of that Lafontaine to whom Châteaubriand once compared Béranger,(see p. 370 of the present volume,) has paraphrased this inimitable song. Mr. Wright truly remarks that 'the delicacy and tenderness of the aged poet's address to his friend are quite inexpressible in English.'

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LIST OF CONTEMPORANEOUS FRENCH WRITERS.

THE following Table of Contemporaneous French Authors, most of whom are yet living. is extracted from *Esquisses Littéraires, ou Précis Méthodique de l'histoire ancienne et moderne des Littératures Européenes et Orientales*, par D. Lévi (Alvarez).

The names of the Academicians are given as they stood in 1846.

POETS.

Edouard Alletz	Adolphe Dumas	Jules Lefèvre
Edouard d'Anglemont	Antoine Delatour	Méry
Barthélemy	Casimir Delavigne	Alfred de Musset
Belmontet	Deme-Baron	Mollevaut
Béranger	Guiraud	Peyronnet
Sainte-Beuve	Victor Hugo	Paillet (de Plombière)
Bignan	Ernest Legouvé	Pongerville
Bonnechose	Lamartine	Jules de Resseguier
Boncharlet	Lebrun	Viennet.
Boulay-Patay		

ROMANCE WRITERS.

Vicomte d'Arlincourt	Alphonse Karr	Saintine
Arnoud et Fournier	Paul de Kock	Saint-Félix
Balzac	Jules Janin	Sainte-Beuve
Henri Berthoud	Henri de Latouche	George Sand
Bonnelier	Paul Lacroix	Salvandy
Edouard Corbière	Michel Masson	Frédéric Soulié
De Calvimont	Theodore Muret	Emile Souvestre
Félix Davin	Paul de Musset	Eugene Sue
Ernest Després	Edgar Quinet	Touchard-Lafosse
Jules David	Roger de Beauvoir	Alfred de Vigny.
Victor Hugo	Alphonse Royer	

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DRAMATIC WRITERS.

Arnoud et Fournier
Anicet-Bourgeois
Alboise
Albert
Belmontet
Alexandre Dumas
Adolphe Dumas
Dinocourt
Dimaux
D'Outrepont
Empis
Paul Foucher
Victor Hugo
Léon Halévy
Ernest Legouvé
Lockroy
Lesguillon
Félicien Mallefille
Guilbert de Pixérécourt
Paccard
Regnault-Warin
Hippolyte Romain
De Rongemont
Frédéric Soulié

WRITERS OF COMEDIES AND VAUDEVILLES.

Etienne et Emanuel Arago
Ancelot
Madame Ancelot
Mme. de Baur
Bayard
Brazier
Cogniard
De Comberousse
Casimir Bonjour
Carmouche
Dumersan
Casimir Delavigne
Dupaty
Alexandre Duval
Georges Duval
Etienne
Fulgence
Jaime
Lhérie
De Leuven
Halévy
Mélesville
Scribe
Théaulon
Xavier
Vanderbuch.

WRITERS OF TRAGEDIES.

Ancelot
Baour de Lormian
Casimir Delavigne
Delrieu
Guiraud
De Jouy
Lemercier
Soumet
Viennet.

SCIENTIFIC WRITERS.

Adelon
Alibert
Ampère
Arago
Azaïs
Artaud
De Barante
Bodin
Bory de Saint-Vincent
Ballanche
Bignon
Boiste
De Bonnald
Burnouf
Capefigue
Champollion-Figeac
Cousin
Frédéric Cuvier
Charles Dupin
Dumas
Damiron
De Gerando
Delafosse
Droy
Dumont d'Urville
Gay Lussac
Guizot
Geoffroy-Saint-Hilaire
Gail
Léonard Gallois
De Genoude
L'Abbé Guillon
Julia-Fontanelle
Jouffroy
Jomard
Julien
Las-Cases
Lerminier
Lefebure de Fourcy
Lacratelle
Leclerc
Letrône
Milne-Edwards
Michaud
Michelet
Mignet
Nisard
Norvyns
Naudet
Orfila
Pelouze
Poujoulat
Petit-Radel
De Prony
Poisson
Pouillet
Quatremère
Raoul-Rochette
Ronjoux
Royer-Collard
Beriat-Saint-Prix
Sylvestre de Sacy
Ségur
Thenard
Thiers
Tissot
Virey.

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MISCELLANISTS.

Aimé-Martin
Ajasson de Grandsagne
Appert
Antony Béraud
Berthaud
Bouilly
Briffaut
Philarète Chasles
Châteaubriand
Creusé de Lessert
Capot de Feuillide
Cauchoir-Lemaire
Caussinde Perceval
Chabrol de Volvic
De Châteaugiron
Collin de Planay
De Faucompret
Emile Deschamps
Antony Deschamps
Louis Desnoyers
Gustave Drouineau
Delaure
André Delrieu
Ferdinand Denis
Duvicquet
Fonfrède
Ernest Frouinet
Fievée
Français de Nantes
Léon Gozlan
Eugène Grimot
Theophile Gautier
Léon Halévy
Jules Janin
Achille Jubinal
Laurent de Jussieu
Jal
Jouy
Jay
Jouslin de la Salle
Keratry
Le Mennais
De Lamotte-Langeon
Lasteyrie
Lesguillon
Laurentie
O. Leroi
Loève-Weimar
Marrast
Mennechet
Mérimée
Monmerqué
Montémont
Charles Nodier
Marquis de Pastoret
Pichat
Panckoucke
Périn
Pillet
Planche
Ponqueville
Roger
Saint-Marc-Girardin
Sainte-Beuve
Salvandy
De Sénancourt
Frédéric Soulié
Vatout
Théry
Viardot
Villers
Villemain

PARLIAMENTARY AND JUDICIAL ELOQUENCE.

Barthe
Berryer
Dupin
Fitz-James
Hennequin
Lambert
De Laborde
Mauguin
Mérilhou
De Martignac
Molé
Odilon Barrot
Pagès (de l'Ariége)
Guizot
Plongolm
Parquin
Sauzet
Salverte
Persil
Passy
Thiers
Bérenger
Bertin de Vaux
Chaix d'Est-Ange
De Cormenin
Dugabé
Fulchiron
De Lamartine
Laplagne
Nicod
Martin (du Nord)
Girod (de l'Ain)
Jars
Gautier d'Hauteserve
Joubert
Bignon
Tripier
Chauveau de Lagarde
Mandaroux-Vertamy
De Broglie
Decazes
De Noailles
De Schonen
Zangiacomi
Lanjuinais
Montaliret.

SACRED ELOQUENCE.

De Ravignan
Combalot
De Guéri
Lacordaire
L'Abbé Guillon
Macarthy
L'abbé Cœur
De Quelen
Coquerel
Cuvier
Verny
Monod.

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FEMALE AUTHORS.

d'Abrantès	Dupin	De Salm
Ancelot	Flahaut-Souza	Soumet
Aragon	Foa	Sénancourt
d'Ayzac	Gay	Tastu
Belloc	Girardin	Ulliac-Tremadeure
De Brady	d'Hautpoul	Voiart
De Bauror	Saint-Ouen	Valdor
Bastide	Segalas	Reybaud.
Desbordes-Valmore		

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ADDENDA.

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